

# MOTOR UNION INSURANCE CO. LTD.

ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED

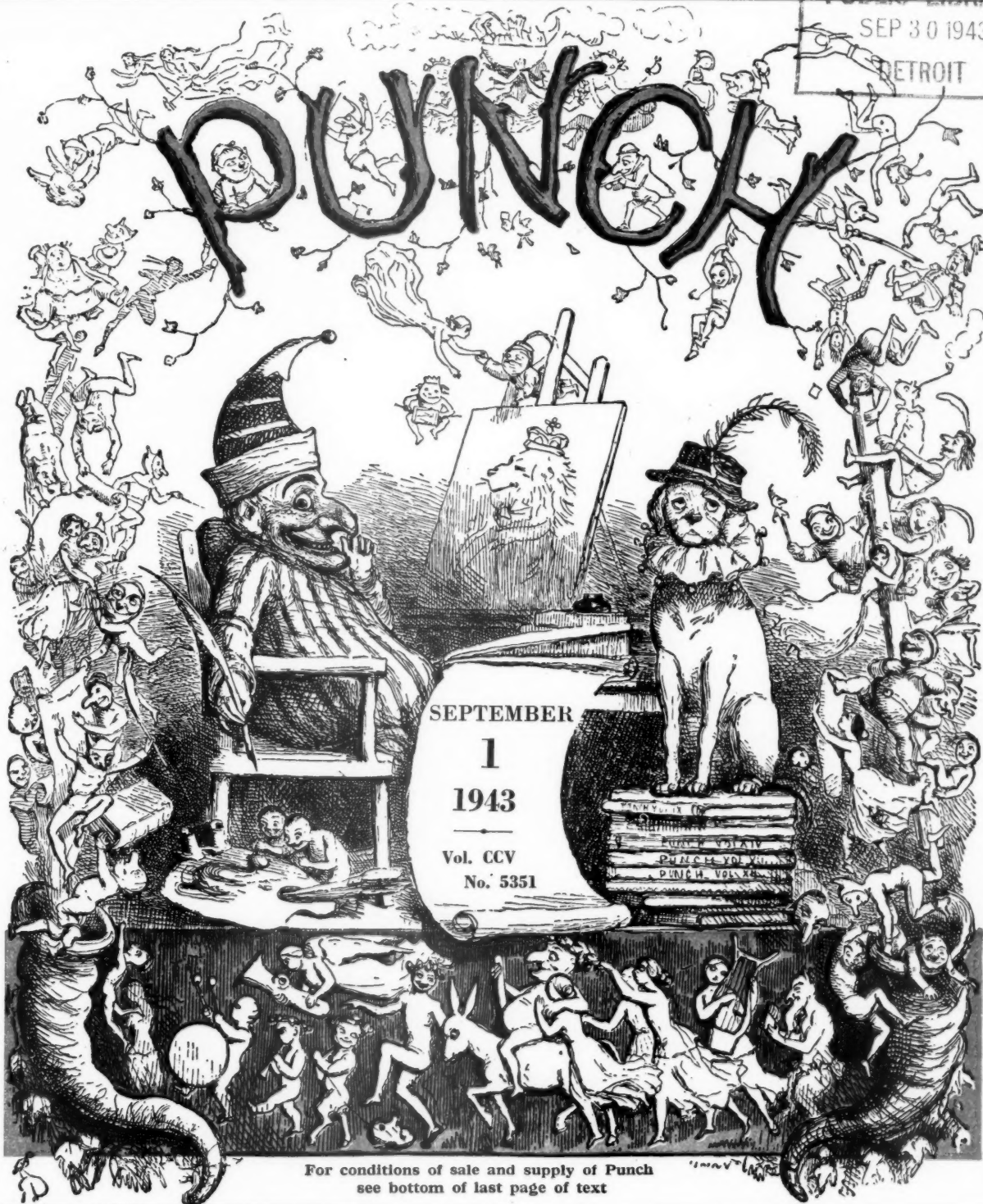


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DETROIT

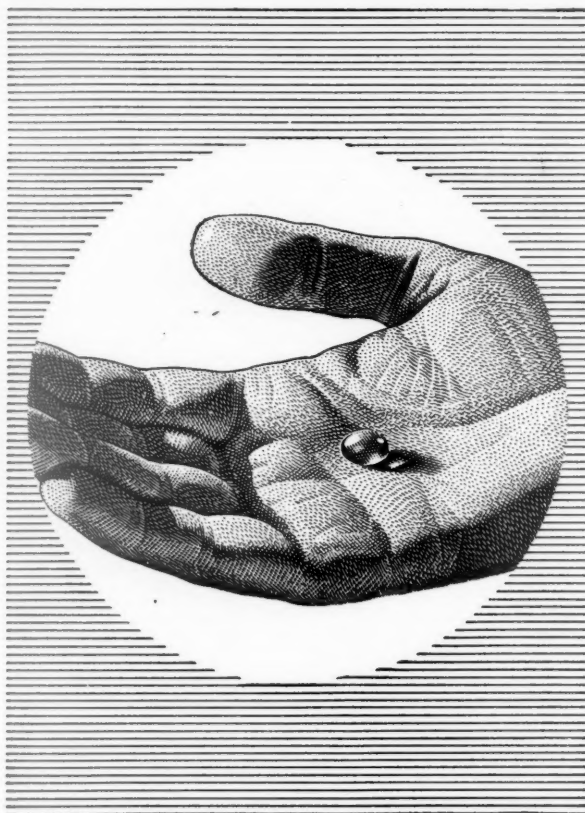


For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text



## Imperial Typewriters

MADE IN  
GREAT BRITAIN



## AN ESSENTIAL OF WARTIME DIET

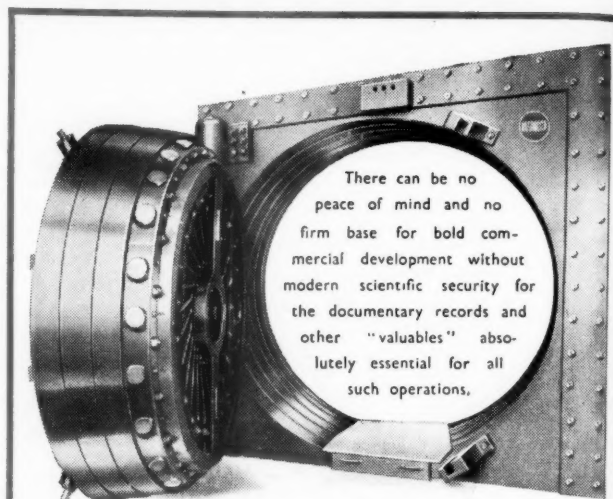
Stored in this tiny capsule are two vitamins without which it is impossible to maintain health. They are 'protective' vitamin A and 'sunshine' vitamin D and, unfortunately, they are not always readily obtainable in a wartime diet.

A daily dose of Crookes' Halibut Oil—one of the richest natural sources of these vitamins—will build up your resistance and stamina and prove of inestimable value during this fifth winter of war.

## CROOKES' HALIBUT OIL

*Obtainable only from chemists*

CAPSULES—PER BOTTLE OF 100—8/6  
LIQUID—PER PHIAL—ENOUGH FOR 16 DAYS 2/-

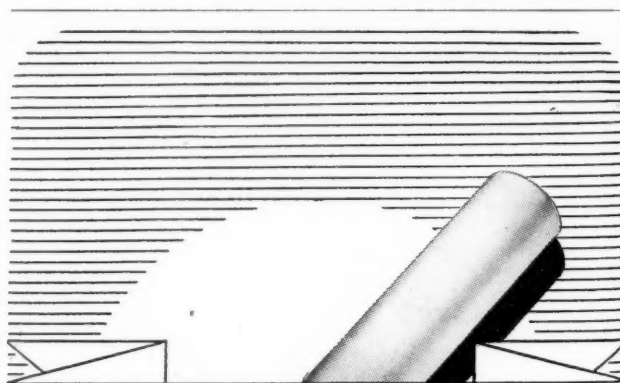


## THE CHATWOOD SECURITY

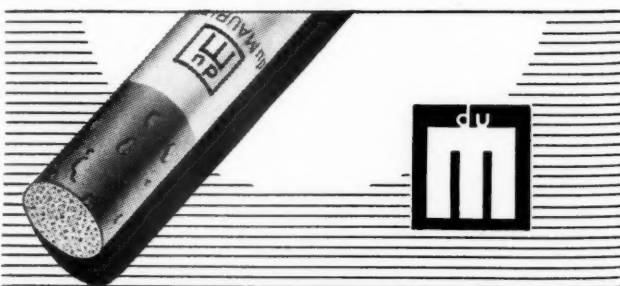
**The Chatwood Safe Co. Ltd.**

BANKERS' ENGINEERS

**HEAD OFFICE: SHREWSBURY, ENGLAND**  
Teleg. Chatwood, Shrewsbury. Tel. Shrewsbury 4001  
London, Manchester, Glasgow, Bombay.



# du MAURIER



Are your teeth  
"under a cloud"?



the  
answers  
on the tip of  
your tongue

Run the tip of your tongue over your teeth. If you feel a filmy coating, change to Pepsodent-to-day and see how quickly Irium—the super-cleanser used in Pepsodent—flushes film away, polishes teeth shiny-smooth. Pepsodent will make your teeth make your smile a ray of sunshine.



1/3, 2/2 Inc. Tax  
ALSO MADE IN  
POWDER  
FORM

TAKE CARE OF YOUR  
★ Tek ★



Make this long-life brush last longer still . . .

Tek toothbrushes, like most good things, are scarce to-day. They are still being made, they are still to be found in the shops—but there are an awful lot of people looking for them! So if you possess a Tek toothbrush already—or if you are fortunate enough to buy one—take care of it. Every Tek toothbrush is designed to give long and useful service. It is made with care: and it will handsomely repay careful treatment.

Always rinse a Tek after use; for if toothpaste is allowed to cling to the bristles and dry on them, their resilience will suffer. After rinsing, shake the brush and leave it in the open. Never put a wet toothbrush into a cupboard.

BRISTLES: 2/- Plus Purchase Tax 5d  
NYLON: 1/8 Plus Purchase Tax 4d

Made and guaranteed by  
JOHNSON & JOHNSON (Gr. Britain) Ltd.  
Slough & Gargrave. T.12

The Windak suit in use . . . . . No. 1

"Brace it up"

Always remember this when donning your WINDAK flying suit (officially known as SUIT BUOYANT). Brace as high as possible and remove all weight from the shoulder points, the jacket is comfortably "bloused" and everything sits easily. This is one of the many points which make WINDAK the ace of operational flying suits. Every requirement has been provided for; electric heating, freedom of movement, ventilation, flotability, quick release if in trouble, ample pocket room . . .



WINDAK Suits  
incorporate features  
covered by Irvin Patent  
No. 407445 and others.

THE "PRU" PAYS  
£2,500,000  
WAR CLAIMS

THE PRUDENTIAL has already paid more than

£2,500,000

on death claims arising from the war.

The full sums assured and bonus additions on pre-war policies amounting to

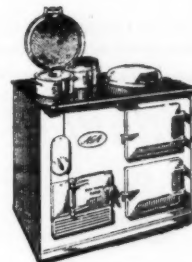
£1,000,000

have been paid, notwithstanding that their conditions, in the event of death from war service, restricted the amount due to the return of the premiums paid.

Continuity of "Home Service" is assured to Prudential policyholders.

THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE CO. LTD.  
HOLBORN BARS, LONDON, E.C.1

I know  
to within  
a bwt.  
what my  
fuel bill  
will be  
this year



I've  
got an  
**AGA**  
Regd. Trade Mark  
cooker

The Aga Cooker is guaranteed not to exceed a stated annual fuel consumption; needs attention only once in 12 hours; is always ready, night and day; preserves juices and nourishment in food.

AGA HEAT LIMITED  
(Proprietors: Allied Ironfounders Ltd.),  
Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street,  
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"absolutely  
wizard"



SHOE & BOOT LACES

FROM YOUR  
RETAILER—  
3d. to 6d.  
PER PAIR

WM. PATON LTD · JOHNSTONE · SCOTLAND

**Barling**  
PIPE CRAFT

Manufactured  
entirely in  
London, Eng.



Take care  
of your Barling  
Pipe. Supplies are  
extremely limited, conse-  
quently difficult to obtain.  
When available, prices are as follows:—  
Standard S.S. S.M. L. E.L.  
or Sandblast 10/6 13/6 16/6 20/-  
Ye Olde Wood S.S. S.M. L. E.L.  
Selected Grains 15/6 18/6 21/6 25/-  
Letters S.S., S.M., L., E.L., on each pipe  
indicate sizes—Small-Small, Small-  
stem, Medium, Large and Extra Large.  
**B. BARLING & SONS, EST. IN LONDON 1812.**  
"Makers of the World's Finest Pipes"

**DAMSONS**



**SNAP  
CLOSURES**

Obtainable from most dealers.  
2/6 Per Carton.  
Plus 8d. Pur. Tax. 1 lb. or 2 lb. size  
**GRAHAM FARISH, Ltd.,**  
(Dept. 140/K), Staplehurst, Kent.

**Pedigree**  
PRAMS & FOLDERS  
All the best babies have them.  
**L.B. LTD. London**

# JAEGER

The authorities ask us to remember that  
**COUPONS ARE FOR OUR BASIC NEEDS**



## COTY

The Coty Beauty Service has spun a girdle  
of loveliness around the world. The excel-  
lence of Coty Creations is acknowledged  
in every land—their exquisite charm is  
beyond compare.

All the more reason for treasuring your  
Coty to-day, the supply is strictly  
limited. The Beauty Service that has  
made the name Coty famous must be  
but a shadow of its former self till Victory  
allows the development of our com-  
prehensive post-war plans.

*Coty*

The creators of L'Origan, L'Aimant, Paris, Chypre,  
Emeraude, Styg, Muguet, "Air Spun" Face Powder,  
Eau de Coty, Eau de Cologne Cordon Rouge, Eau de  
Cologne Four Seasons, etc., etc.

C.P.2



as always—  
a quality product



Happy days  
will  
come again  
and  
so will

## Schweppes

**THE MENACE OF MOTHS  
MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY NOWADAYS**



In the interests of national  
and personal economy, take  
immediate steps to protect  
your clothing, etc. with  
Mothaks.

**MOTHAKS**

6 1/2 D. SAVE YOUR CLOTHES  
AND COUPONS  
PER BAG OF 8 MOTHAKS SOLD EVERYWHERE

**Carters**  
(INVALID FURNITURE)



Owing to essential contracts the  
range of invalid chairs and invalid  
furniture is now limited, but we are  
still in a position to supply certain  
articles. Please give full particu-  
lars of your needs and we will  
endeavour to accommodate you.

GT. PORTLAND ST., LONDON, W. 1.  
Phone: Langham 1049.



## Concentration



You cannot *do* your best or *be* at your best if you are continually nagged by your nerves. Concentration is a great strain on the system, and often results in headaches or neuralgia or strained nerves or restless sleep followed by that taut, pent-up feeling.

## Relaxation



To be really fit for to-morrow's work you must relax when you get home. But you cannot relax if you are pinned down by pain or too tired to sleep. Take two 'Genasprin' tablets at bed-time and make sure of deep, refreshing sleep. You'll be a new man to-morrow

# Genasprin

*Regd. Trade Mark*

**kills pain QUICKLY—time it!**

'Genasprin' is absolutely pure and safe. It cannot harm the heart or digestion. There is no substitute for 'Genasprin'. Get some from your chemist today. 7d., 1/5d., 2/3d.

A 'GENATOSAN' Product

*In the Land of the Maple*

they **SWEAR** by **KOLYNOS!** of course

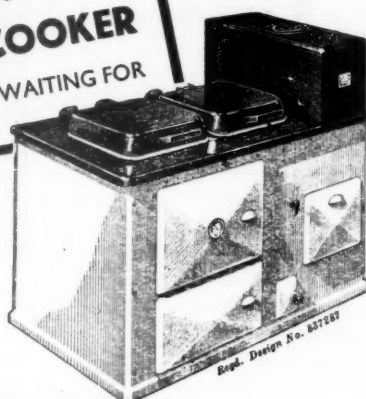
Aptly described as an Empire Arsenal and an Empire Larder, Canada has also played the role of fairy godmother to many children evacuated from their homes in Gt. Britain. We may be quite sure that in acquiring new habits they will be encouraged to develop those instilled by their parents; washing behind their ears, for example, and cleaning their teeth night and morning—with KOLYNOS.

# CURICONES

## FOR LUMBAGO

AND ALL RHEUMATIC AFFECTIONS.  
DOCTORS USE IT

Remember!  
**THE 'AB' COOKER**  
IS WELL WORTH WAITING FOR



- **Cooking and Water Heating** combined in one unit.
- **Big Fuel Economy** Ensured through automatic fuel feed.
- **Food Values Are Retained** by balanced distribution of heat.
- **High Temperatures Are Available** at a moment's notice.

**You Are Invited . . .**  
to visit the Demonstration Kitchen at the address below, and see how the "AB" Cooker works—also get advice on your war-time cooking problems.

Write for Free Illustrated Brochure to:

**FEDERATED SALES LIMITED**  
(Dept. P3C) 80, GROSVENOR STREET, LONDON, W.1  
Telephone: Mayfair 5054/6

**COMBINING COOKING & WATER-HEATING**

(Controlled by Federated Foundries, Ltd.)



**THANKS TO THE MEN OF THE MERCHANT NAVY**



Thanks to the courage of the men of the Merchant Navy we get our daily cigarettes, our daily food and the "sinews of war". They are the men that make invasions possible—that make victory certain.

**MERCHANT NAVY COMFORTS SERVICE**

Appeal Hqrs., 62 Heath St., London, N.W.3  
This space is donated by the proprietors of **STATE EXPRESS CIGARETTES**

*Threads from the loom of time*



## 5 TURNING POINTS IN HISTORY

As the nineteenth century drew to its close, English fashion, led by Courtaulds, rediscovered the exhilaration of colour. Courtaulds lovely crapes and silks did much to brighten the last decade of the 1800's.

The new century brought fresh honours. At the Paris Exhibition in 1900 Courtaulds were the only English silk manufacturers to be awarded a Grand Prix. But the Paris Exhibition was notable for something much more important. It was

here that Courtaulds first took an interest in the process which led to the perfection of rayon.

Today Courtaulds Rayon is scarce because National needs come first, but the "cease fire" will restore it to the shops again—more beautiful and versatile than before. What is more, the name Courtaulds will stand sponsor for new developments and products no less indispensable than rayon to the amenities of post-war life.

**COURTAULDS—the greatest name in RAYON**



# REDI-BILT

## INTERLININGS

**KEEP YOUR SUIT IN BETTER SHAPE**



**LOOK FOR THIS SEAL ON YOUR NEXT SUIT**

When this seal is fixed in the lapel of the jacket you can be sure that no finer interlinings can be used.

**Are you a neck-roller?**

Fitness is not entirely dependent on exercise. Nourishment is an all-important factor. Turog brown bread can help here. It gives you extra stamina, energy and vigour.



# Turog brown bread

Difficulty with supplies? Then write to SPILLERS LTD., 40 ST. MARY AXE, E.C.3

## "Rest-therapy" may be the solution to your INDIGESTION

PERHAPS, in the parlance of palliatives, you have "tried everything" — everything except the oldest, simplest and most effective therapy — Rest. Give your strained digestion a course of rest and it will recover its natural powers. So, follow this simple rule. Never eat a full meal when you are tired or worried. Instead, drink a cup of Benger's Food. Benger's soothes the stomach and gives your digestion a chance to recuperate and build up its strength. Yet it provides the warmth and nourishment the body needs but in a form it can fully absorb without discomfort or digestive strain.

*Why Benger's is so good for you.*

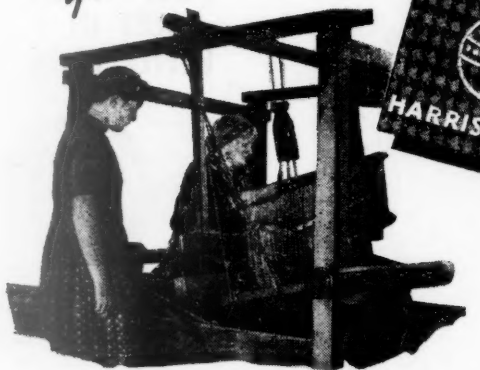
Benger's is rich nourishment in a form which requires very little effort on the part of the digestive organs. It contains active enzymes which partially predigest milk so that you absorb the full value of this valuable food whilst giving your digestion the rest it needs.

Benger's, to-day, is as easy to make as a cup of cocoa. From all chemists and high-class grocers — The Original Plain Benger's, Malt Flavoured or Cocoa and Malt Flavoured.

Benger's Ltd., Holmes Chapel, Cheshire.



*This mark is your Guarantee*



When you see that Trade Mark on the cloth, or that Label on a finished garment, you know that here is Harris Tweed—100% pure virgin Scottish wool, woven by hand at the homes of

the Islanders of the Outer Hebrides, by crofters whose skill has grown through generations. There is nothing else like it: nothing to equal its style, character or marvellous wearing power.



## HARRIS TWEED

The Board of Trade accepts the following definition:—"Harris Tweed" means a Tweed made from pure virgin wool produced in Scotland, spun, dyed and finished in the Outer Hebrides and hand-woven by the Islanders at their own homes in the Islands of Lewis, Harris, Uist, Barra and their several dependencies and all known as the Outer Hebrides.

THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LTD., 10 Old Jewry, London, E.C.2.



## THE 1942 NORTHWEST PASSAGE

Outstanding amongst the many fine achievements of to-day, is the Alaska Highway, uniting Edmonton, Alberta, with Fairbanks, Alaska. Progressing at the rate of 8 miles a day, this great constructional feat was accomplished in the record time of six months—a triumph for modern methods and equipment. A triumph, too, for the Goodyear Dumper and Scraper Tyres which played their part in this amazing enterprise. Built to get the maximum performance from motorised equip-

ment, these special purpose tyres kept the wheels turning along this highway even under the toughest conditions. Goodyear Dumper and Scraper Tyres, developed to meet the requirements of the newest road-building equipment, have also been largely responsible for the making of other new records in the handling of excavation, road and general construction. Once again, the name Goodyear is written large in the pages of progress.

*Another*

## GOOD YEAR

*contribution to Progress*



Hey diddle diddle, they're hinged in the middle.  
No wonder they're comfy to wear.  
They're gay, warm and strong  
and they'll last twice as long,  
If the "treads" are kept well in repair.

## Clarks

Made by C. & J. CLARK LTD. (WHOLESALE ONLY) STREET, SOMERSET  
and by Clarks (Ireland) Ltd., Dundalk. Retailers throughout the country.



# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



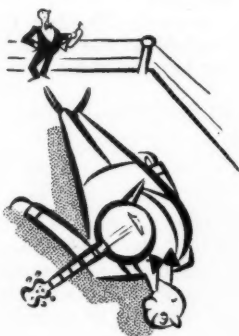
Vol. CCV No. 5351

September 1 1943

## Charivaria

It is expected that whale will be on London hotel menus before long. Filleted, we hope.

Before a big fight in New York two novices knocked each other out simultaneously in the first round and, recovering consciousness, each claimed a foul. For beginners they seem to be getting the hang of the thing very well.



A banjoist in an American dance band was laid out by a blow from a fellow musician's trumpet. Quite accidentally. The trumpeter was swinging it too much.

Many children have never seen a banana or a lighted street lamp. It will be strange, too, after the war, for elderly

people to be urged to go and teach their grandchildren how to suck eggs.

A famous Hollywood screen actress is unmarried. And has been several times.

A burglar who broke into a wine and spirit shop stole two bottles labelled sherry but containing water. What did he think they contained? Sherry?

### You Have Been Warned.

"FENELLA  
THE WORLD'S WONDER  
TIGRESS  
FREE AUG. 23 ONWARDS."  
Advt. in "The World's Fair."

A correspondent remarks he found it difficult to obtain a blotting-pad recently. Did he think of asking for writing paper?

An auctioneer remarks that thousands of pounds are being paid for collections of antique furniture. It would be almost as cheap to buy secondhand.

The case is recorded of a German who woke recently after having been in a coma since 1940. It was broken gently to him that this was the same war they won three years ago.

A war correspondent says he was surprised at the amount of tea our troops drink. Perhaps he has never tried cookhouse coffee.

In the interior of Australia a farmer has been discovered who has never heard of Hitler or Mussolini. It is suggested that he should be told something about what the Fuehrer is doing while there is still time.



### Suggested Epitaph

Here lies an English patriot, proud and free,  
His soul devoted to his country's cause;  
From 1939 to 43  
He seldom broke the laws.

Tins of Portuguese sardines now on sale in this country are very tightly packed and are not provided with key-openers. Then how is entrance effected? By sliding doors as on the Underground?

A writer wonders what will happen to Germany if Hitler dies. More morbid-minded people are wondering what will happen to Hitler in that eventuality.





## Fire Party

IT was a great and memorable gathering on the yellowed lawn. As far as the eye could see, or so I fancied, stretched the immense concourse of fire-fighters, not only from our own hundred and fifty flats but from all the huge buildings round about us. How many squads I know not. We call them squads, but when I think of the writhing tentacles of so many uncoiled lengths of stirrup-pump hose I often feel that squids would be an apter word. It was one of our Grand Practice Nights.

We were met to put out a conflagration artificially kindled in a ruinous house a quarter of a mile away. Old and middle-aged men and women, beautiful girls, and apparently children swelled the mighty host. We could have put out, I fancied, the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Presently came the rumour "The fire has started," and the whole army, with its pumps and buckets, poured out into the street, some stepping briskly, some weighed down with years and infirmity, in boiler suits, in siren suits, in old coats and flannel bags.

On the way I met a Home Guard whom I knew. I was carrying an axe.

"What on earth are you doing?" he said.

"Saving my country," I cried. "I know you haven't got weapons like this in the Home Guard but you'll work up to them in time."

We proceeded. As we drew near to the appointed place a cracker was heard to explode.

"Crouch, men, crouch!" I commanded my squad. Three of them in fact were women. One, a man, was very stout indeed.

"I can't crouch," he said.

"Then you're killed," I pointed out.

"Can I go back home if I'm killed?"

"Not likely. Your soul goes marching on. And it goes on carrying its stirrup-pump, what's more." For I noticed that the coward had put it down.

My allotted task was to take my squad down a passage and deal with the crisis from a garden in the rear of the street. Several gardens, it seemed, had been knocked into one. Vegetables were growing in them. There were sheds and garages beyond.

I had a bright idea. "No need to look for a tap," I said. "Here is a water-butt. Plunge your buckets in that, my hearties, and let us get to work with a will."

They plunged them in. There was a loud cry and a man came running out of a shed.

"You no take my water," he cried. "I cultivator." I said "We are fighting a fire, my good man." "I cultivator," he repeated. "I wish my rain water for my herbs."

Clearly the matter lay between the Home Secretary, the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Food. There was no time to appoint an inter-departmental Committee.

"Put his water back," I said, "and find the nearest tap."

They did so. The man retreated to his shed.

"Now up the steps to yonder balcony," I cried. Tripping over the Virginia creepers, entwining ourselves with convolvulus, we ascended. The French window was half-open but shuttered to the sill. With a blow of my axe and a loud shout I broke the shutter.

"Number One forward! Numbers Two and Three to man the bucket and the pump!"

Number One took a hitch in the hose, lay down, and squirted.

A scream issued from inside the room. Out of the shed the cultivator came running again.

"You squirt my wife!" he shouted. "She in bed!"

I never met so unreasonable a man. Niggard of his rain-water, occupying an apparently derelict house, he had a wife in bed at 2000 hours on an August evening in the middle of a great war. But an error had clearly been made.

"It's the wrong house! Proceed to the next!"

We climbed down, went through a broken wall and up through more creepers to another balcony. There was no doubt this time. A fire of brushwood was plainly visible, burning brightly on an open hearth.

"Beware of the smoke, Number One! Crawl on your belly!"

There was another open window on the far side of the room, and another balcony. A man came in by it, rushed across the room and seized my foremost bucket.

"Just what I wanted," he said.

Number Two hung on firmly to the handle.

I said, "You can't have our bucket. Go away." There was a struggle. The bucket was upset. I brandished my axe in a threatening way. The man fled.

Another bucket was brought forward. Number One crawled into the room. "Water on! Mind the smoke!"

There was hardly any smoke, but he rubbed his face on the floor.

"All shout together, 'Are you all right, Number One?'"

All shouted together.

"All right, damn you," he replied.

He put out the fire.

"Water off!" I said.

Just then an umpire came in by the door.

"You've done everything wrong," he said crossly.

"The squad at the other window ought to have tackled the fire first, been overmastered by fumes and dragged out lifeless by rescuers, and then you were to be called in. Now you've gone and spoilt it all."

I took out my automatic lighter. "I am sorry," I said. "Shall I light the fire again?"

"You can't now. The floor's too wet."

So it was. Number One and I looked like sweeps. We retired disconsolately. When we had got downstairs, another cracker exploded.

"They're all killed now except us," I explained. "Stand by to drag their lifeless bodies downstairs."

But it seemed I was wrong again.

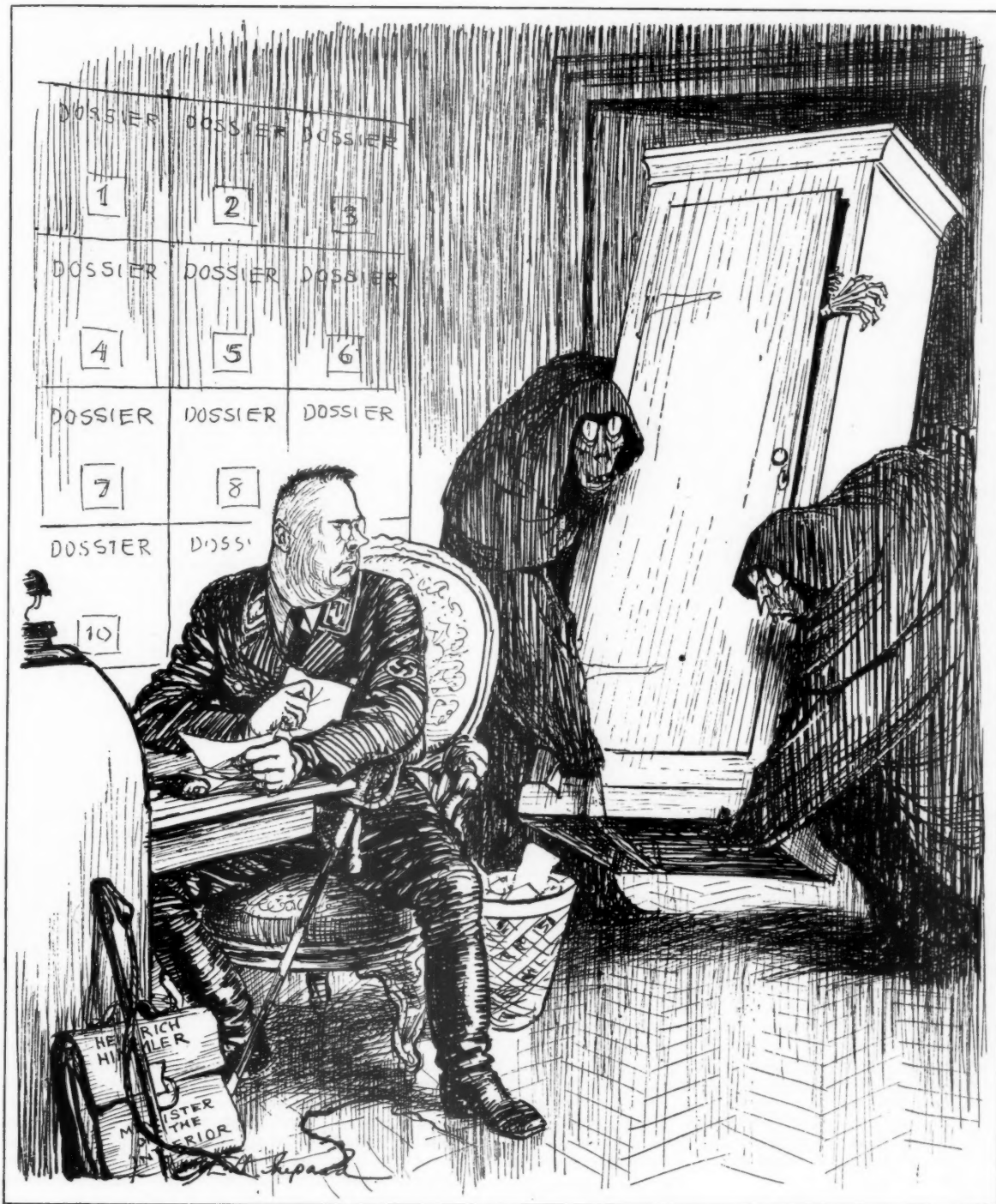
"All squads but Eight and Nine to form a bucket-chain," came the cry.

We ambled round from the back of the houses, and joined the jostling mob in the front shrubberies. Bucket after bucket filled to the brim went smartly from hand to hand. Shouts of "Where is that water?" came from a window high up amongst the trees.

"What are they doing with it all?" I said. "It should be streaming out of the windows by now."

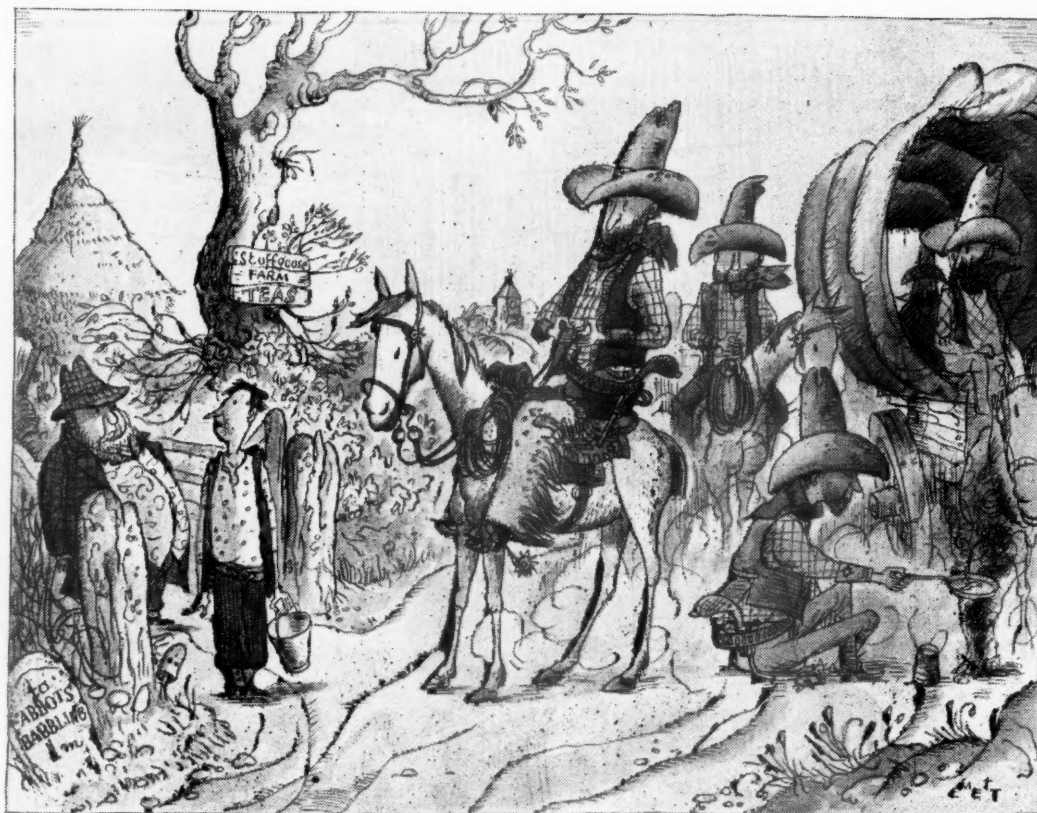
"Drinking it, I dare say," said the man on my right. He seemed to be the sort of man who would say a thing like that. "But we aren't getting any empty buckets back again."

I climbed on to a derelict wall. I perceived at once what was the trouble. So vast was the crowd, so confusing the tangle of vegetation, that the buckets were indeed forming an endless chain. Instead of reaching the scene of the fire, they had been diverted and were coming back



# FURNISHING THE OFFICE

"Where will you have this, Herr Minister?"



"They say they're looking for the Colorado beetle."

perpetually without being emptied at all. A link had failed in the organization.

I reported the matter and it was rectified. The chain renewed its efforts, and in a few minutes the house became one of the wettest in London.

A halt was called. The multitude assembled round the portico of the dark and dripping edifice, stood in the shadow of the trees and huddled far out into the street beyond, where it mingled with the wretched loafers and idlers who had come to watch and jeer. We were thanked heartily, told that owing to our errors we were all long since dead, but with more practice would do better and become alive again. We were told that we were all tiny cogs in a vast machine stretching right up from the humblest bucket-bearer (we blushed) away through the National Fire Service to Mr. Herbert Morrison and even beyond.

"And now," concluded the lecturer, "I want you to give three hearty cheers to the men who gave up their time to come here and build the fires and set them alight for us to practise on."

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!" we cried.

The parade was over. I found that I was without my axe. I went round again to the gardens at the back and saw the cultivator. He had my axe in his hand. He also held an Airedale terrier on a lead.

"You come near, I set my dog bite you," he shouted.

"Very well. I shall report the matter through the proper channels to the Prime Minister when he returns from Quebec."

He gave me back my axe. I trotted briskly away and joined my companions.

But how different, I thought, from the puny efforts we used to make, we amateurs, to put out the fires of 1940 and 1941!

EVOE.

#### ANOTHER CENTENARIAN

MR. PUNCH, himself a hundred and two years old, respectfully offers his congratulations to *The Economist* on joining the ranks of the centenarians. The first number of "The Economist, or the Political, Commercial, Agricultural and Free Trade Journal" appeared on September 2nd 1843; by the end of 1844 it had become "The Economist, Weekly Commercial Times, Bankers' Gazette and Railway Monitor." The "political, literary and general newspaper" which at such a tender age set out to guide the infant steps of the railway has survived, growing in fame and political influence, to become an international institution. Mr. Punch recommends to interested readers the centenary volume published by the Oxford University Press: *The Economist, 1843-1943*.



## New Zealand at War

**W**E'RE from Wellington, from Auckland, from Hawkes Bay,  
From deep valleys where the Wanganui sings,  
From the kauri woods where axes thud all day,  
From the land of smoky vents and scalding springs.  
*We're the furthest-off dominion! We're the island pioneers—  
But, in Empire's hour of jeopardy, the King's own cannoners!*

We're from Christchurch and the Canterbury plains,  
From the wooded vales where blazing rata blows,  
From the lakelands, green and rich with sweeping rains,  
From the Southern Alps that smile amid the snows.  
*We're the farmers of wide pastures, where an English seed  
is sown,  
And our hands are quick to action when the call to arms is  
blown!*

We're the dwellers in an oft-forgotten place,  
Where the country is the master of the town,  
Where we've buried all the bitterness of race  
In a brotherhood which knows no white or brown.  
*So the time of testing finds us with no schism in the heart  
But a single people marching to perform the warrior's part!*

## H. J. Talking

**F**ROM time to time I broaden my mind by associating with the underworld, which refreshes me by taking more notice of the very latest science than is taken by the country as a whole. I usually foregather with them at a small café called Co's, it being run by a Limited one. On the surface Co's is respectable in the extreme; tea, halma and "The Maid of the Mountains" on the gramophone being its distinguishing characteristics, but all the habitués are bad and cunning types and definitely scum de la scum. For many years I dropped into Co's and nobody would speak to me at all; then one or two would nod; next I was promoted to an occasional game of halma; and finally, on the strength of my scientific knowledge and my being friendly without pushing myself forward, I was completely accepted.

One of the most interesting of the boys is "Stoat" Stukeley, who specializes in thefts from private zoos, though, owing to the difficulty of finding a fence and the heavy cost of feeding his loot in the meantime, he has to supplement this by doing translations for publishers, he knowing Swahili and Welsh. His inseparable companion is Septimus the Strangler, an expert retained by different gangs when appropriate circumstances arise. His fees are based on the dimensions of the neck to be dealt with, and therefore the cord he uses is marked in millimetres. Some of the boys at Co's have spent years fitting themselves for their work and several are Chartered Accountants. "Stoat" read for the Bar exam, but as he obtained a first in Criminal Law and failed in everything else he was never called, he having little love of learning for its own sake.

The manageress of this café sometimes invites favourite customers to join a little club in a room at the back of the shop, and here one can have refreshments even on early closing day. Instead of a gramophone there is a mechanical piano, an indication of the increasing Americanization of British crime. The room is also used for changing the appearance of those who wish to go unnoticed. This

service is constantly pressed on people by Ma Filet de Boeuf, the manageress, and it is very difficult to refuse without offending her. She is not really very good at it, having only two patterns to work from, Gat-toothed Burman and Child Violinist. Many pranks are played on the two C.I.D. men whose business it is to haunt Co's, though sometimes these go too far, as when they were doped and their appearances changed, this causing complications about their pension.

I have recently been testing the effect of stimulants on chess-players. I found two people playing chess in a café, one an elderly curate and the other a Persian rug-seller, and invited them to conclude their game in my laboratory, where at carefully-timed intervals I gave the clergyman liqueur chocolates and the rug-seller vitaminized sherbet. For the first hour the only interesting result was that the speed of moves increased in geometrical progression. In the second hour tempers grew high and the loss of a piece was always followed by exchange of cards and a request for satisfaction. The third hour was a time of maudlin friendship and co-operation in which each player agreed to operate only in his own half, pieces which got across the line being returned with a polite bow. The fourth hour was marked by an alliance between the players against the pieces, which they attacked with fountain pens. When peace was made the clergyman married the king and queen on each side, on the grounds that he distrusted the looks of the bishops, and the rug-seller gave them bathmats as wedding presents adorned with a Persian inscription which said "This is not a towel."

One day I intend to buy a share in a mill, as these are generally thought to attract eels, which swim round and round the wheel if it is worked by water. Windmills, no doubt, attract birds, and fewer of these are edible. The advantage of being a miller is that it is one of those occupations where you put things in a machine and they come out much as you would wish to see them, this being obviously much less wearing than such careers as confectionist, archdeacon or etcher. Another advantage of being a miller is that the atmosphere is white. However dirty your clothes may be when you begin, white is what they are when you finish. In Paris there is a mill called the Moulin Rouge or red ditto, and this is an odd colour for a mill to be. Perhaps it was originally intended to produce some kind of health loaf. Anyhow, it did not turn out to be a success as a mill, which one can understand, and became a music-hall. Another agricultural project that failed in Paris was the Folies Bergères, which means insane shepherds. It may have been part of some way of treating lunatics and getting up their self-confidence by putting them in charge of sheep, which are mentally restless and make no demands. This, too, became a music-hall, the French being a frugal people and not liking anything to be wasted.

### Entirely New Situation

#### "ERRATUM"

In the advertisement published in the shoulder column captioned 'Unique Advantages PCC Offers' published on Saturday last for 'Why Dilly Dilly' please read 'Why Dilly-Dally.'

West African Pilot.

### Splash! Splash! Splash!

"Yesterday Mr. Eden, Mr. Brendan Bracken, and Sir Alexander Cadogan dropped from the skies on to the waters of the St. Lawrence, right outside the Citadel."—Daily Paper.

## Tempus Fugit—and How It Does.

I HAVE just finished working out my working hours, which are irregular, unpaid, and far-flung, and feel there is nothing now (except my working hours) to prevent me from working out how long it has taken me to work them out. There are people like that—not cracked but just hopelessly entranced.

The pea-sticks were very difficult to fit in to the working-hour statistics, because work on them spread itself out over nearly eighteen months. They came under the heading "Food Production," and this was subdivided into (a) From Retailers (b) From Hedge-rows (c) From Native Soil; and (c) was subdivided again into (1) Spade-work and (2) Etc.; and the pea-sticks came under (2) Etc., which was an usually large file.

In 1941 A said (innocuously enough) "We want some more pea-sticks." At the time he was dressed as a corporal in the Home Guard and was receding very quickly towards the front door, where he added "Cobblestone's the best man. 23. Or 45." I pursued him to say wistfully "Will you ring up then—or do you mean me?" but A always remains blind to the fact that war transforms even such as his wife into people with quite a lot to do, and even disregards the list I carry openly about with me, covered with urgent reminders such as "2 tiny screws," or "Ask at H if M's ½ preserves cut off mstke for gooseberry j," or "Bone Meal(?)." Instead, he did a convincing act of someone in the Army with not a moment to lose, and from about half a mile away his voice floated back. "Thanks, darling—will you?" not in any way a satisfactory reply.

War of course also transforms one, even despite bitter opposition, into a competent person; and with a sharp utility pencil I added to the list "Ring Cobblestone—23 or 45—pea-sticks—at once." Translating words into action I got through in an hour or two, and a girl asked me if I wanted old Mr. Cobblestone or young Mr. Cobblestone. I thought perhaps the more active would cut the pea-sticks, and asked for young Mr. Cobblestone.

She said he'd been in Burma these two years with the Yeomanry. He'd been posted missing, she said, but had turned up in Rangoon with no worse than a bit of earache. I said it was wonderful the way things panned out, and would it be best in that case to speak to old Mr. Cobblestone? The

girl had been stealthily biding her moment to say that old Mr. Cobblestone had strained a tendon, something terrible, ten days it would be on Friday at 11 o'clock, and couldn't drag himself to the telephone.

He dragged himself to it about a week later.

"Labour," he said instantly, "is my trouble. Labour! I tell you candidly the labour situation in this country is something I don't care to talk about."

He forced himself to talk about it a little more.

"Stakes," he said. "I've a good order for twelve dozen stakes, three foot six each. I've got the wood, I've got the tools. Who's going to cut the stakes?"

"You?" I said tentatively.

By some mischance he rang off, and when we got on again he said transport was his trouble.

"Transport! I've got the van, I've got the sticks. Four miles divide us. But you can't move a van without petrol. You can't get blood out of a stone."

Weakly, I began to jot down on the pad "Telephoning re pea-sticks—about 3½ hours" when suddenly, unexpectedly, I was seized with a ruthless dynamism. Cutting short his saga on the tobacco-tax I instructed him incisively to get the pea-sticks to the station by hook or, indeed, by crook, let them travel five miles to our local station, where they would be two and a half miles nearer than they were before, and the responsibility would become ours. This plan miscarried, and they were borne swiftly to Plymouth by the Cornish Riviera.

Some might have cut their losses. I did not. Dynamic as ever, I rang up a second cousin near Plymouth. She lived by herself on the moors, was called Honoria Bursledon, and I didn't see her from one year's end to another. It seemed but little loss, for she lacked intelligence about the pea-sticks, dispatching them to Ditcham-on-Sea instead of Ditcham-cum-Michaelmas, which surely she might have remembered for its picturesque name alone.

I followed them. It was a long cross-country journey, but it was necessary. At Ditcham-on-Sea I firmly believe our pea-sticks to have been seized by an unscrupulous market-gardener, and think I saw him, over the hedge, brazenly sticking peas with them. A friend living close advised me that pea-sticks are unidentifiable in a court of law, so, instead, I went to stay with her,

and began to cut pea-sticks for myself out of her convenient woods, laying aside every few days a bundle to take home. It naturally took a few weeks, and A, on the telephone, lacked understanding. I explained that as well as the pea-sticks I was occupied in preparing my friend's son for school. This boy was weak on his multiplication tables, and my being weaker was the greatest inspiration he had so far had.

In the garden world it is everything to be beforehand, and, though late for that particular year, I was able, on reaching home, to stack twelve bundles of pea-sticks in a dry place against the following summer. The fact that they were ignorantly used for kindling was a circumstance none could foresee.

Mr. Cobblestone has now promised to deliver twelve new bundles of pea-sticks; but he says weather has been his trouble. It's either fine or it's not, so he never knows where he is. The curious thing is that the other day young Mr. Cobblestone got the D.C.M., and his father said it was for quickness of action in a tight corner. Perhaps Mr. Cobblestone's *real* trouble is just that his corner has never been tight enough.

## Advice

"MY dear, I do so want your advice. I should like to tell you the whole story, only you must *swear* to keep it to yourself." "Certainly."

"It's about—well, it's really about all sorts of things, in a way. One doesn't know where to begin. But I've quite made up my mind to tell you absolutely *everything*. I suppose in a way it's about this woman who works with me—this Mrs. Shivers, as she calls herself."

"Isn't it really her name?"

"My dear, I haven't the slightest idea. I don't know why she should call herself Shivers deliberately. I must say, but you may be right."

"I didn't mean to suggest—"

"Oh, but do. I mean, I *want* you to suggest things, after all. And that red-haired man, who works in the same room, is pretty certain that she's wanted by the police. He has Highland blood on his mother's side—I think red hair so often has, don't you?—and he has second sight. Not all the time, you know, but in flashes."

"I don't think the police would take much action on information that was based on second sight."

"Oh, dear, please don't think I mean to be horrible, but could you possibly let me tell my story my own way? Otherwise I feel we shall get into such a muddle."

"All right. Go on."

"You're sure you're not hurt?"

"Not in the very least."

"I can't bear hurting people's feelings. That's really part of the trouble, I think. Wilfred feels I ought to speak out to this woman."

"Wilfred?"

"I asked him what he thought, in strict confidence. But Judith said *exactly* the contrary. 'Watch your step,' she said, 'and don't utter a single word.' It does make it so difficult when everyone says something different."

"But does everyone know?"

"Oh, good heavens, no, no no! I told you it was most frightfully hush-hush. Why, a friend of Joan's—who shares the flat with me, you know—put the whole thing before a cousin of hers, who is a barrister, without giving him any names of course, and he said that X—that was me, and everybody else was Y or Z or W—that X might quite easily find herself run in for libel."

"Then hadn't you better not say any more?"

"But I shall go mad if you won't help me. I'm nearly distracted. After all, one's country is one's country, and she may be betraying it right, left and centre. And just at the moment when everything's going so well too, and the Second Front may start at any minute."

"Do you mean you think—"

"I simply don't know *what* I think. Aunt Alice says it would be much better if I didn't think at all, but that's absurd. So like an aunt too, don't you feel? Uncle Adrian doesn't agree with her in the least. He never does. Do you know what *he* says?"

"What?"

"That truth is stranger than fiction."

"Really, you've got so many people to help you that I think I'd better not try—"

"But they *aren't* helping me. That's just the point. Even the Vicar at Winkington, whom I've known since I was born, only writes that those on the spot must be the best judges, and encloses a leaflet about a Sale of Work in the village."

"I really don't see what else he could have done."

"Well, I think it's quite absurd, when I'm not even going to be at home



"I fail to see how this is going to help the war effort."

for the Sale. They said Don't Travel, and I'm *not* travelling. Anyway it's just been made a prohibited area. I'm going to try to get to Land's End later. But I do want to have this settled first."

"What are your alternatives?"

"Oh, I don't know. There are thousands, aren't there? I mean, it's all so complicated. As Ruth Bond said, whatever one does or doesn't do is pretty certain to turn out wrong."

"That wasn't very helpful."

"That's just it. Nobody is being in the least helpful. Though I've had a very nice letter, I must say, from an airman in Australia."

"An airman in Australia?"

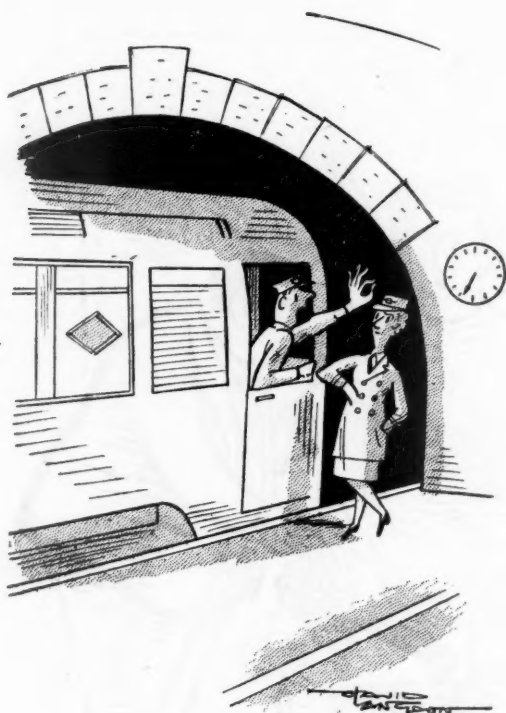
"It isn't anyone I know personally. In fact he's never been over here, though I believe he's longing to. But Joan's old grandmother knew *his* grandfather very well, and says she's always heard how clever this young man is, and why didn't I just write and put the case to him—not giving any

names or places and just making a few alterations so as not to give anything away—and ask his advice. So I did. If you'll wait a minute, I've got his letter in my bag . . ." E. M. D.

### Yesterdays

THERE is a fragrance  
To our yesterdays now,  
Those hours of vagrance  
Beneath moss-dappling bough,  
The virgin dew on tranquil lawns,  
The merle-spiced shower on new-dug soil,  
Unclouded turquoise dawns  
Before the sun grew royal—  
Each breathed of another day  
To unfold gently at our will  
And end in flush like banked rose-bay  
Behind a golden hill.  
Life had a graciousness,  
A restfulness, a spaciousness.  
Perhaps we did not see this then,  
But we'll not miss it when it comes  
again.





"... and then you see a tiny pin-point of light which grows bigger and bigger until slap me if it isn't another station! It's wonderful."

### Keep Your Uncles at Home.

"I SHOULD, very much indeed," I said—"I'd no idea you had a billiards room in the house."

"Every amenity," said my wife's Uncle Clarence. "Come on upstairs." He paused on the bottom step and yelled "Fred!"

My wife's Uncle Fred, coming out of the garden carrying a luxuriant weed as tall as himself, said gravely, "Game of pills, is it?"

"Game of pills," affirmed Uncle Clarence, goutily beginning the ascent.

My first thought on entering the billiards room was that it was a little crowded; there would have been more space if the billiards table had been taken out. I wondered, in fact, how anybody had got the billiards table in.

"Clear the decks for action," said Uncle Fred.

Uncle Clarence was already struggling to remove a gigantic needlework frame, as complicated as a loom; it had a half-worked sampler embedded in the middle of its struts.

"Let me, Uncle."

"It goes in the bathroom," said Uncle Clarence, surmounting the task without hesitation—"and the pottery goes in the bedroom next door." The reference was to three huge blue-and-white pitchers which stood on the billiards table itself.

"What about the garden chairs?" I asked a little later.

"Out of the window," said Uncle Fred. "We may want them this afternoon anyway."

I hung the chairs out of the window over the lawn, as low as I could reach, and dropped them one after another.

"Now then!" said Uncle Clarence, taking a cue from the top of a wardrobe.

"Right!" said Uncle Fred. He fell suddenly to his knees beside the arm-chair in the corner and began scrabbling about underneath it. "Lift the chair a bit, boy." I did this, and he dragged out a battered attaché case.

Uncle Clarence tore the patchwork quilt from the table. Uncle Fred inverted the attaché case over the faded green cloth, and the table was suddenly filled with the multi-coloured balls. They rolled about undecidedly for a second or two, then ran gently to the bottom end, where they jockeyed for position against the blackened cushion.

Casualty I took up a near-blue and rolled it briskly towards a top pocket; although it lost speed sadly it managed to climb over the lip of the pocket and fall loudly to the floor; then it rumbled its way back over the linoleum where I fielded it deftly.

The game was Russian Pool. Every man for himself. I was courteously invited to "take first poke." I took a cue from the top of the wardrobe. It could not have been more than a yard long.

"Not that, boy," said Uncle Fred, who was chalking his own cue on the ceiling—"that's for trick furniture-shots. There's a longer one up there. It's warped but it's longer."

"Thanks," I said, and addressed the ball.

"Wait!"

"Steady on!"

My wife's uncles had cried out simultaneously. The window behind me, it seemed, had to be opened before any play could take place at this end of the table.

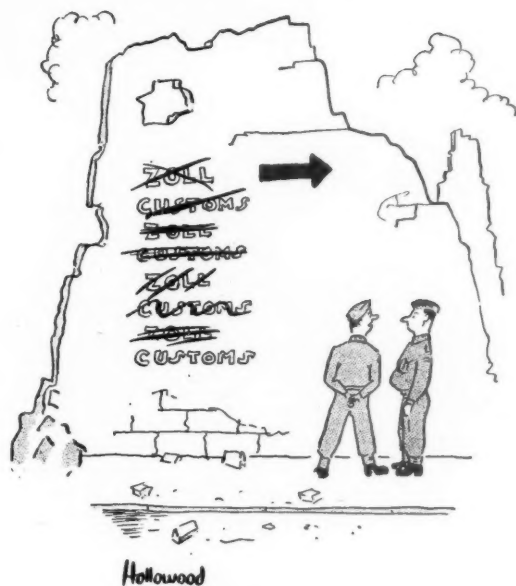
I took my shot, miscueing badly. I am accustomed to using a tipped cue. I noticed that the ball struck the cushion with an unfamiliar booming sound, and did not come away more than half an inch. I was to get used to this presently, for the balls were soon to be distributed round the cushions as if magnetically attracted, making the table look like an educational model illustrating the proper way to park army vehicles in a field.

Uncle Clarence followed, bringing off a neat cannon—a sharp jab stroke played from a sitting position on the oak chest by the fireplace. He had to take down a picture of barges iced up during the great frost in order to do this. I noticed that the wall behind the picture was scarred and pitted. "I am going to make a big score," said Uncle Clarence, surveying the table through half-closed eyes. "Ah, well," he said, and made his way round to the wardrobe, moving edgewise. Opening both wardrobe doors he began to hand out several suits, coats and umbrellas; these Uncle Fred took in a matter-of-fact way and threw into the arm-chair. Uncle Clarence then disappeared backwards into the wardrobe and, after a pause filled with hollow thumpings, neatly potted the yellow. He sighed happily as he re-entered the room and received the contents of the wardrobe back again. He closed and locked the doors.

"I am going to make a large break," he announced, climbing on to the oak chest, his cue almost vertical. But he miscued. The ball ran up the table, hesitated, stopped, rolled backwards an inch or two on to the cushion.

"I don't like it," said Uncle Fred, and stood gnashing his teeth ruminantly. "I don't like it at all; not at all; not a little bit."

He glanced shrewdly from the white ball to the book-case. Feeling behind him for his cue, he grasped the luxuriant weed, which he had brought up with him,



"This place changed hands seven times before we finally took it."

weighed it for a moment, decided against it and took up the yardstick cue. "Nothing on the table at all," he said. "Nothing."

He advanced to the bookcase, opened it and took all the bound volumes of *Home Chat* off the top shelf. He stooped, sighted, grimaced, straightened up, turned and removed the top shelf itself from the bookcase. Then he sighted again and potted the pink.

"That's all I shall make," he said, adding, "No, no—don't you bother," as I began to put the books and the shelf back. I continued, however, seeing that it would be impossible to play any more strokes standing on the chest as long as the volumes of *Home Chat* were there.

"Not a hope," said Uncle Fred, looking things over. Then he climbed into the seat of the arm-chair and played a masterly stroke. Not only did he cunningly take advantage of the incline of the table, but neatly avoided the stuffed pike which hung on the wall in that corner. It was a superb stroke. Inman would have been baffled by it. The blue ball curved impossibly into the top pocket, through on to the floor and into the fender.

Uncle Fred declared that there was "nothing whatever on the table." Nevertheless his break continued for three more shots. Two of these necessitated his disappearance into the wardrobe (which was opened, emptied, filled and locked on each occasion), and the third was taken standing in the oak chest. (I took out a few tennis rackets and a concertina for their own safety.) For this last he held the cue above his right shoulder to avoid the woodwork of the overmantel. But he muffed it somehow. He picked some fragment of something off the table afterwards, carried it carefully to the window and threw it out with the garden chairs.

I studied the table, weighing up the possibilities.

I could get in the wardrobe and pot the yellow; I could manage a cannon, yellow on green, by taking the yardstick cue into the bookcase; or I could pot the pink, via the arm-chair and stuffed pike. I had practically decided on this when the gong sounded.

"Lunch!" cried my wife's uncles, throwing their cues on the table and leaving the room.

"Fetch the vases, boy!" said Uncle Clarence from the landing.

"Bring back your aunt's needlework!" said Uncle Fred from the stairs.

Their voices began to fade. But as I barked my shins on the needlework frame and toiled beneath the blue-and-white pitchers I heard Uncle Fred make some rather derogatory remark about my skill at the game.

Uncle Clarence defended me, though, and I was grateful to him. He reminded Uncle Fred that the light at this time of the morning was apt to be confusing.

#### "COOK REQUIRED"

Successful applicant will not be required to cook!

WAGES as demanded! Outings to suit!

All Social Services FREE!

So long as we can say—'We have a Cook.'

Apply — HOTEL, P—,

Advt. in "Richmond and Twickenham Times."

Some people are so conscientious.



"I'm on detachment pending posting and I've been granted a more or less unofficial 295 subject to immediate recall and not to be counted against privilege or included in personal occurrence reports . . ."



"... an' then I wants to 'ave a dekkko at the Giottos at Padua."

### *Littera Scripta Manet*

"NOW that our more pressing ordeals are past," read the editor, "we have leisure to prepare for the future by studying the origins of our strength and of our weakness. As always, we made a bad beginning. This was due partly to a lack of immediate resources, but partly also to poverty of enterprise, which robbed us of the all-important initiative and made it necessary to concentrate upon defence. The spirit of attack is essential in cultivating what is called 'the will to win,' but this had to be built up gradually, by patient application, as time went on. It should also be noted, without indulging in undesirable recriminations, that a want of inspired leadership hampered us in the opening stages of the struggle, so that the individual genius was stifled and our antagonists were able to profit by the opportunity and strike first."

"We hope that these criticisms, in

which we have purposely avoided dealing in personalities and technical details, will be accepted as both impartial and constructive. Only so can we hope to achieve the desired object on future occasions of putting our full strength into the field at the outset and so avoiding the reverses which have so often befallen us in the past. The experience has been worth while only if we have absorbed the lessons which it teaches."

The editor finished reading and looked up with a puzzled expression.

"This is all right, Joe," he said. "Non-committal and all that. But I seem to have read the whole thing before somewhere or other."

Joe gave one of his cryptic smiles. "Wouldn't be surprised, Chief," he replied.

"Well," said the editor, with a shrug of the shoulders, "it'll come in handy when they really *do* throw up the

sponge. But it's a bit early now—isn't it?—with only the Wops on their last legs."

He looked up curiously. "You say we may have used it before? Must be a long time ago then. Nineteen eighteen, was it?"

Joe gave a chuckle.

"Not *quite* as long ago as that, Chief. Nineteen twenty-six, to be exact. As a matter of fact you wrote it yourself when our Cricket Correspondent was taken ill—just after England had won the Ashes at the Oval."

o o

"HERRINGS TO TRAVEL FREE"  
Heading in "Daily Mail."

But we sardines still have to pay.

o o

"All the six main workshops were destroyed, five of them severely."

Daily Paper.

Well, it's a total war.





IN THE PIT

## Foolproof

I DON'T know if you have much trouble in remembering things. I have. I can remember all sorts of completely useless trash, mind you. I can remember, for example, the number written inside a watch owned by a young lady who broke my heart in 1923. I said I had a good memory and she said I hadn't and I said she could tell me something to remember, then, and I'd remember it. So she opened her watch and read me the number 109367, and I have remembered it for twenty years. And what good did it do me? She married a bloke who could remember better things than that—funny stories, possibly, or the Derby winners since 1889. . . . He probably did an Othello on her and won her by reciting a list of the world's fifty largest cities. And if that is the sort of thing that impressed her, she did well to abandon me, because I can only remember a few things, really, and none of them useful. I suppose it was only the maniacal strength of love which gave me the power to do the watch trick. At any rate, it was merely a fluke of some sort. I must insist on this and make it as clear as possible, for if these words should meet the young lady's eyes, she might be touched to think of my remembering a thing like that for twenty years. Worse, she might think I really have a pretty useful memory after all. And if she finds herself unmarried at the moment, she might . . . I mean, I can't be too careful. There would be no use in looking me up on the strength of one isolated feat like that. My whole point is that my memory is not good but rotten. Why, dash it all, the number of that watch may not be 108367 after all. Wait a minute! Did I say 108 or 109? Because now I honestly don't know. Hooray, I have forgotten the miserable thing at last! I am free!

But as I was saying, while I can remember silly things, such as the birthdays of chaps at school long ago, when it was a pretty good thing to know such shameful gossip as the date of a chap's birthday . . . it gave you some sort of frightful power over him and he'd give you any bribe to keep it dark, but the power has ebbed now and I dare say I could go up to old Alex McTavish to-day and spring the date of his birthday on him and he wouldn't even blench, flinch, or blanch . . . well, as I was saying, while I can remember that sort of stuff with ease, I simply can't remember the most

essential things, such as the bright idea I had in bed last night. And incidentally, when I do have a bright idea in bed there is no use in switching on a light and writing it down, because I can never remember where I left the special pencil I know I put in the bedroom for just that sort of thing.

It isn't amnesia, exactly. Amnesia is a sort of disease, I believe, and my trouble isn't that. It comes naturally to me. I was born with it. It's just a question of being without talent that way, like being born without the ability to copy out long bits of Wordsworth in fretwork or to agree with the colonel that when he orders you to amuse the troops this order of itself should damn well make you amusing. And I must say it doesn't worry me much. Or it didn't, until I tried that rotten foolproof memory system.

My aunt told me that my Cousin Joskin had done wonders to his memory by means of a system based on the association of ideas, and she got me to try it. The system is this: you fix on a key list of images, any number of them up to twenty or so, and then if you want to remember twenty things you just associate each of them with one of your key images, and then when you need to remember the twenty things, you are reminded of them by the twenty key images. After you have remembered them for a while they gradually fade away, but the key images may be used again, of course. All very simple. But it seems to me that there is a catch in it. First of all, you have to have ideas, and then you have to associate them.

In my first key list I just selected images at random and I found I couldn't remember them at all. No. 1 was some pickles, I think, and No. 2 a dog and No. 3 a geranium, and so on. Well, I had to remember to see my lawyer, so I associated him with a pickle. The great thing is to make a vivid picture to yourself and I did that all right. I could see him eating pickles as clearly as anything. And so on, right through the list. But then I found I couldn't remember my key images, so where was I? I had no key list to remind me of my key list, you see. The next time I was more systematic. I resolved to remind myself of my key list by making the thing alphabetical: No. 1 was an apple, 2 a bear, 3 a cauliflower, and so on. This worked slightly better, but there were great gaps in my memory still. I couldn't remember if A stood for apple, apricot,

archery, admiral, advowson, or what. In my distress I would wonder casually if it could be apple and I would be far too agitated to see the image that was there all the time . . . there would be my lawyer, munching apples at me with the most urgent grimaces, and I couldn't see the fellow at all, because all I could see was apples and apricots and admirals in great confusion. The association of ideas had become mere chaos. Not an association at all, you see, but a random assembly, like a Marble Arch gathering on a Sunday afternoon. And the real key images began to associate with each other too, which was silly . . . apples and bears got together, and it would be a bear eating apples instead of my lawyer eating them.

Well, my aunt has now bought me a child's alphabet book with simple rhymes and footling pictures and I am studying it every night. I am getting to know it rather well and it may prove useful in the end, but in the meantime I take some pretty painful dialogue from people who drop in and find me reading it. And my aunt joins in the laughter. Well, it was her idea. Apparently her ideas don't associate as well as they might . . . not gregarious, so to speak. I must remember to tell her that. How can I remember? Let me see. . . . A was an ape who wore a long cape and got himself up in very fine shape. I can see this ape telling my aunt that her ideas are not gregarious. But perhaps I should have a picture of some gregarious ideas hopping around, or something? Otherwise, you see, I'll just see him talking to my aunt and I'll forget what he's meant to be saying. These pictures, it seems, are the old-fashioned silent type and not talkies. It is all very difficult.

o o

## Ah, the English!

MY dear, you will never believe in our luck, and indeed Uncle Edward and I hardly know how to believe in it ourselves. But here we are, at the sea, for our long-awaited holiday. As Uncle Edward says: "It is *really wonderful*."

After all the dear old places on the South Coast had said they were full up, and everyone had told us not to *dream* of going to the East Coast, and I had persuaded Uncle Edward at least to let me *try* Wales—but there isn't a room to be had anywhere there, and anyhow on the Monday evening Uncle



"If any civilian asks you, say 'an unknown destination'."

Edward had gone back again to not liking the Welsh—one really did feel rather discouraged. And I even said to Uncle Edward that if all else failed, the boarding-house in Cromwell Road *where we are known* might manage to squeeze us in somehow, and we could take our holiday in London. Uncle Edward was very good about it, but I could see he didn't like the idea, and he kept on saying that we should miss the sea in Cromwell Road, which of course was *true*. Well then, dear, I heard about this marvellous little place on the coast and that one of the hotels was supposed to be able to take people in, so off I flew to the telephone and they were as kind as possible and said they would let me know, and would have no objection if we weren't *children or dogs or invalids*, and didn't mind a very small room overlooking the yard. I could hardly believe my luck when I actually got a postcard saying they would have us, only we must ring up on the day of arrival and make sure they hadn't been turned into a prohibited area, and they couldn't meet us at the station.

Uncle Edward is *really pleased* about it all. He takes an interest in the

barbed wire which they have put up all along the front, and he has already thought of a much better and more practical way of doing it. But you must not think we are not getting plenty of *ozone*, as I call it. There are some deck-chairs on the Esplanade and Uncle Edward decided on the very first afternoon that it was quite warm enough for us to sit on them, and though I had most unfortunately, and I must say *foolishly*, left my thick coat and scarf at the hotel, down we sat on these green chairs which are now two-pence, I suppose because of the war. Well, dear, we couldn't help laughing when the man in charge came up, before we'd been there more than a few minutes, and said deck-chairs weren't allowed after five o'clock on account of the Defence of the Realm. Uncle Edward thinks it has something to do with U-boats, but I think myself it's nothing but the Invasion of the Continent.

The little hotel is quite good in its way about food, though why they can

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

*always* get marmalade, which Uncle Edward never touches, instead of jam, one doesn't know. In great difficulties about staff, of course, and Uncle Edward feels the porter is inclined to be *mental*, though good at his job, and only two maids, both willing, but very old and with practically no memory at all, either of them.

No one very interesting staying here, but the place is quite full, which makes it nice and cheerful, and the lounge always crowded, so that one wishes they had more chairs. The drawing-room—such a nice little room—is always empty but has the wireless, though unfortunately out of order and even Uncle Edward thinks something must be *missing* that cannot be replaced until the war is over. Weather turned much colder since we arrived, and is now very wet, but I *do* feel we are lucky to have got a holiday at all and to get *right away* from the war atmosphere.

Uncle Edward says I am to tell you that he saw *an orange* this morning, in a shop. Quite like old times. He also says *Watch Sweden* and sends his love.

Your affectionate Aunt.

E. M. D.





"Let's all crowd round the door—we may be able to keep this compartment to ourselves."

## The Phoney Phleet

XXVIII—H.M.S. "Minestrone"

THE Royal Navy's very free  
From any hint of snobbery;  
It isn't done,  
And anyone  
Can rise to 18-carat rank,  
Such matters as his birth or bank  
Not even being noted.  
However, there are limits and  
Soup-scooping with the naked hand  
Is after all  
A trifle tall,  
So Alexander Duff, A.B.,  
Who had this eccentricity  
Continued unpromoted.

He came of an ambitious clan,  
Go-getters to a single man,  
Which made him hate  
This static state  
And ponder in the middle watch  
Subversive schemes designed to scotch  
This prejudiced obstruction.  
His pride forbade him to desist  
From palming *purée* with his fist  
Which he'd been taught  
Was *comme il* fought  
And infinitely more refined  
Than using spoons, which were a blind  
For plain unvarnished suction.

At length he took the bit between  
His teeth, and late one night was  
seen  
To leave the Base  
With blackened face  
Propelling an unhealthy raft  
Which those who watched him  
thought it daft  
To venture on the ocean.  
A week elapsed. The worst was  
feared.  
Then Alexander reappeared,  
But this time not  
Alone; he'd got  
A German drifter which he swore  
He'd captured somewhere off the  
Nore;  
Now what about promotion?

They made the chap a Leading Hand  
And, more than that, let him  
command  
The prize he'd brought  
Because they thought  
Apart from justice this was wise;  
His crew could hardly criticize  
His methods of nutrition.  
It seemed, in fact, the perfect plan;  
But then they didn't know their man—

They hadn't meant  
A precedent  
But Alexander made it one:  
He went and bagged a bigger Hun—  
And where was his commission?

Commanded by Lieutenant Duff,  
This trophy duly did her stuff,  
The man-of-war  
He swopped her for—  
A cruiser, *Zwiebelhund* by name—  
Establishing his valid claim  
To be a full Commander.  
And then he bagged a battleship.  
And . . . well, I think perhaps we'll  
skip  
A stage or two  
And hurry through  
The sequence—Captain, Commodore,  
And last, as C-in-C the Nore  
Admiral Alexander.

I feel that stories of this sort  
Should end with some uplifting thought  
Which well might be  
That Constancy  
And Perseverance Ring the Gong—  
Or, rather, since that's somewhat  
long,  
Faint-heartedness is Phoney.  
Perhaps, on reading it again,  
It really shows that St. Germain  
If firmly baled  
And not inhaled  
Leads straight to Fortune, Bliss and  
Fame.  
And, by the way, we need a name—  
H.M.S. *Minestrone*.

WE pray that it may not  
be long before a Euro-  
pean tyranny worse than  
Napoleon's crashes to its doom  
and we can look back at the time  
when Britain alone barred the  
way to the evil hordes and say  
again with

### WILLIAM PITT

"England has saved herself  
by her exertions and Europe by  
her example."

We do not know how far  
distant that day is; but we do  
know that the needs of the  
Fighting Forces are greater than  
ever. They need everything we  
can give. Have you given all  
you can spare to PUNCH COM-  
FORTS FUND? Every penny  
means that some fighting man  
somewhere can have more of the  
small comforts that mean so  
much. Send to-day to PUNCH  
COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie  
Street, London, E.C.4.

## Problem Child

**I**N peace-time it was a restaurant-car. In war-time it was all tables and no lunch.

The lady with the peke and the lady with the green feather in her hat sat on the same side of the empty table, because they both felt sick if they sat with their backs to the engine. The man reading *Death of a Hoarder* and the child in the school cap sat opposite. The child had a small suitcase which it placed on the table. It opened it and took out a bag of chocolate biscuits.

It ate a chocolate biscuit, one with chocolate outside and pink stuff inside.

The train started.

The child ate another chocolate biscuit.

In succession it ate a large number of chocolate biscuits.

The lady with the green feather in her hat looked at the child. It was the look of someone who places chocolate biscuits high in the scale of life's pleasures. The other lady looked too. So did the peke.

Both ladies did calculations. The lady with the peke made it three points. The lady with the green feather in her hat made it four.

The man finished chapter ten of *Death of a Hoarder* and started chapter eleven.

The child started its twelfth chocolate biscuit.

The lady with the peke said "You are a very lucky little boy to have all those chocolate biscuits in war-time. Poor Baba hasn't had a chocolate biscuit since rationing started."

The child stopped eating and squinted. Squinting was its latest trick and it liked doing it to frighten people.

Though the question was not really necessary, the lady with the green feather in her hat asked the child if it liked eating chocolate biscuits.

The child said it would say it did.

The lady with the peke said to the lady with the green feather in her hat that she hadn't seen a chocolate biscuit for six months.

The lady with the peke said she hadn't either.

The child said "Oh, we've always got lots at home. My dad gets them."

"Where from?" the two ladies simply *had* to ask, in case they could get some too.

"My dad," the child said, "he gets them from the black market."

The two ladies said "Oh," and were a bit shocked.

"My dad," the child said, "gets

whatever he wants from the black market."

The man finished chapter eleven of *Death of a Hoarder* and started chapter twelve.

"My dad," the child continued, "he says he's sorry for people that can't get what they want from the black market."

"Your father," said the lady with the green feather in her hat, "ought to be ashamed of himself."

The lady with the peke said ditto.

The man turned over from page 112 to page 113.

The child said "That's not my dad," and laughed as if the idea was a very funny one.

The man said in explanation "Somebody asked me to look after him. He's being met at Wormcast," and turned over two pages by accident.

The child discovered that the bag was empty. So it opened the case and took out another—containing a different sort of chocolate biscuit this time, and even more delicious.

The child looked a bit green, but by squinting at the peke it pulled itself together and started eating again.

The lady with the peke said "Disgusting."

The lady with the green feather in her hat said "Disgraceful, I call it."

The train stopped. It was Wormcast.

On the platform was a policeman—the sort of policeman who has

conscientiousness and integrity written all over him.

The child threw both empty bags under the table, directed a parting squint at the peke and prepared to get out.

The lady with the green feather in her hat nipped out first. She made for the policeman and said "This is a horrible child. He has been admitting that he is the son of a man who gets chocolate biscuits from the black market."

The policeman looked for the child.

"Hullo, George," he said, and to the lady: "I'm afraid this is my own son. He is a horrible little liar. Loves inventing stories. He never tells the truth to anybody, not even to his father."

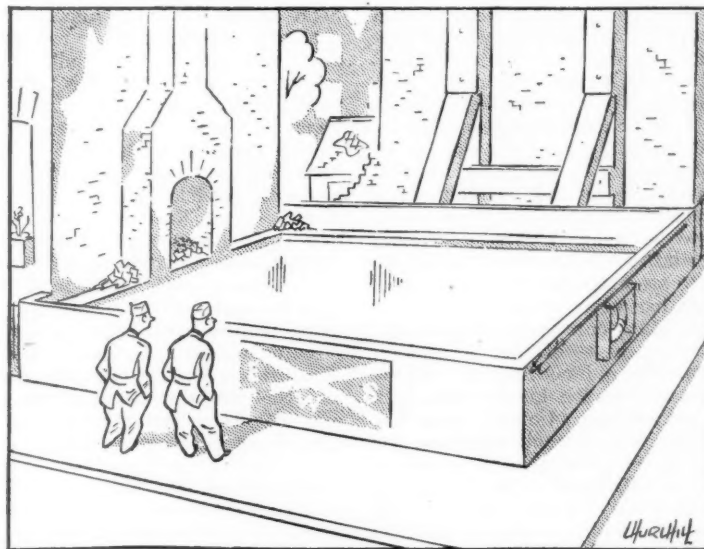
The whistle blew and the lady with the green feather in her hat nipped back into the train.

On the platform the policeman said "Your Aunt Milly said she was sending us a present of some chocolate biscuits. Have you got them?"

The child said "They fell out of the taxi and a bus ran over them and a dog ate what was left of them."

The honest policeman shook his head. It was his wife's idea, not his, that you should not repress children or interfere with their natural impulses because of the danger of establishing repressions and inhibitions and things.

The child said "I don't feel very well, dad."



"So THAT's where my folks came from."

## At the Play

### "THE WATCHED POT" (ARTS) VARIETY (PALLADIUM)

It was ingenious of Mr. ALEC CLUNES to dig up a hitherto unacted piece by "SAKI" in order to round off his festival-scheme of five English comedies at the Arts Theatre. To complete a quintet of wits interested in the theatre, what name could be much better than "SAKI's" to add to those of Farquhar, Sheridan, Pinero, and Shaw? The choice has the additional charm of being an inobvious surprise, since comparatively few of us were aware that the play existed or that "SAKI" was interested enough in the theatre to write it (in collaboration with Mr. CHARLES MAUDE).

Anthony Hope's *Dolly Dialogues* put upon the stage could hardly be less substantial than *The Watched Pot*. In construction, pattern, characterization, form, it betrays the inexperienced hand. It has no plot and no momentum. It is, at one and the same time, about too much and too little. But it is over and over again witty in "SAKI's" Wildean way, and this wit together with its rich Edwardian flavour—a combined aroma of Ess Bouquet and cigar-smoke—makes the play appetizing and acceptable.

We are in the middle of the decade which followed the 'nineties, the ten years which Max has somewhere called "the noughts." Young couples spoon. Matrons concentrate upon match-making with a peculiar intensity and fervour. The gentle sex at every age sits about in flat bonnets and motor-veils, waiting patiently for their menfolk to start the engine of that exciting novelty the automobile. This particular play might, in fact, without unfairness or disparagement, be compared to such a machine circa 1905. It takes a long time to begin, makes a mighty noise for half an hour while everybody clammers in, and then, instead of going forward, suddenly lapses into silence again; it cannot be said to stop, for the excellent reason that it has never started.

Consciously or unconsciously "SAKI" took the idea of his second-act hubbub from Jane Austen. Every enlightened person knows that, with the possible exception of some few of Shakespeare's tragic climaxes, the most dramatic thing in the whole of the world's literature is the unexpected return of *Sir Thomas Bertram* from Antigua to find private theatricals in progress at Mansfield Park. Agitation here hath made his masterpiece! The

guests in "SAKI's" Somersetshire house-party are similarly enjoying a masked ball in costumes made out of bed-sheets when the redoubtable *Mrs. Bavel* makes her over-early return. As in Jane, "almost each was feeling it a stroke the most unwelcome, most ill-timed, most appalling!" But fortunately there is a languid *raisonneur* on hand, *René St. Gall*, to clear the air with his wit. *René* (delightfully played by Mr. DENYS BLAKELOCK) is a weary dandy who defends dandyism in the neatest way imaginable. "This suit I've got on was paid for last month—so you may judge how old it is!" And neater still: "A fool and his hair are soon parted." And there is an observation on a certain *Lady Chutsam's* youngest son who finds it advisable to leave Mayfair for Manitoba: "Thus conscience doth make cowboys of us all!" Mr. BLAKELOCK makes *René* justly aware of his wit, but not too much so. He has a sickly fleeting smile with each flash—*un sourire glabre*, as the French would say—which underlines each aphorism with an exquisite faintness. Few current actors have the comic sense so delicately balanced, so nicely calculated.

Miss SUSAN RICHARDS, too, is admirably fierce as the hostess who, in her own words, "returns to her orderly home to find it a—casino!" Her son (Mr. PETER JONES) is a sleepy young man who is resolutely kept awake by a cluster of young ladies and a near-Cockney adventures (the clever Miss AVICE LANDONE again). These pursuits and retreats keep the first and third acts going well enough, and there is usually Mr. BLAKELOCK on hand or Mr. RICHARD GOOLDEN as a not-quite-so-brilliant uncle to prevent any subsidence into dullness or insipidity. Mr. CLUNES has produced with a capital sense of a period which he must be just too young to recollect. But he should have far more liberally bedewed the men's hair with the glossiest possible pomades, and he should then have correspondingly graced his chairs with antimacassars—objects as essential to an Edwardian drawing-room as a keystone to a bridge. The five plays at the Arts are now being performed in sequence for the next few weeks—*The Constant Couple*, *The Rivals*, *The Magistrate*, *Misalliance* and the sparkling charade just considered. There is not one which we should not willingly revisit.

The Palladium has returned to variety for the first time since the war began, and that past-master of the leer, Mr. MAX MILLER, is at the top of a robust, enjoyable bill which will

proceed unchanged until it fails to attract. Gone, apparently for ever, are the days when central London could support three or four large music-halls with a weekly change of programme and a liberal series of stars in the same bill, all of them quite as major as Mr. MILLER, to say the least. This is not written deplorably. All that one deplores is the dearth of talent as indisputable as that of this immensely popular comedian with his East-End street-barrow jokes, his shining features and ridiculous clothes, his questionable asides, and his unquestionable expertness in technique and "timing." To deny Mr. MILLER personality—as we have heard some sour-favoured persons do—is to deny the modern music-hall's existence. The person who gave us the second largest amount of pleasure in the programme was the new conductor of the Palladium's excellent orchestra, Mr. GEORGE STEELE. He proves that a good musician is by no means wasted in a good music-hall. A. D.

## At the Pictures

### LAND, SEA AND AIR

It is for the moment surprising that of two current films dealing "factually" (or more factually than usual) with the war, the M-G-M one with ROBERT TAYLOR in the Army should be on the whole less theatrical in manner than the Warner Brothers one with HUMPHREY BOGART and RAYMOND MASSEY in the Merchant Navy. One had grown used to thinking of Warner Brothers as the company more than another that produced solid, worthy and essentially unexaggerated stories about real life, and M-G-M as . . . well, a more romantic and excitable type. But *Bataan* (Director: TAY GARNETT), full of excitement, wise-cracks and emotion though it is, is both better-made and (in my view) more real in much of its atmosphere than *Action in the North Atlantic*.

Basically it much resembles the last good silent film I ever saw—*The Lost Patrol*; but it has a stronger impact because there is no detachment in the audience now, which goes into the cinema already hating the enemy and already emotionally connected with the soldiers here shown fighting them. This also is the story of an isolated patrol the members of which are killed off one by one: they are a mixed lot, including even a sailor, charged with the duty of delaying the Japanese advance in the Philippines after the



fall of Manila. There are thirteen of them at the beginning of the picture and there are (it is safe to assume) none of them a moment or two after it ends. Again, as in the earlier film, the sergeant is the last survivor.

The film is impressively good in its way. It is moving without being sentimental, and amusing without showing that it has been deliberately peppered with wisecracks to relieve the tension; and the tension often is extreme. All the playing is good, with ROBERT TAYLOR's (as the sergeant) outstanding perhaps chiefly because as a matter of sheer duration he has most to do. LLOYD NOLAN is excellent as a good soldier with an evil past, and ROBERT WALKER (a new face) does well and memorably as the young sailor.

Perhaps I have implied that *Action in the North Atlantic* (Director: LLOYD BACON) is excessively theatrical, which is not so. The only trouble is in certain over-coloured lines of dialogue, in an occasional artificial heightening of mood. There is really no need for HUMPHREY BOGART's off-screen voice, introducing himself at the beginning, to tell us sternly and dramatically that the gasoline carried in his ship is "the stuff that makes tanks roar" and all the rest of it. We can surely be expected to know the importance of petrol by this time without having banners waved over it. But this presumably is a part of the effort to impress the unthinking with the value of the Merchant Service. "Who cares about us?" says another man on the ship, "Everybody's nuts about the Army and Navy, but . . ." I don't think this is so common an attitude as the film suggests—now, at any rate.

The basis of this picture too is simple: the freighter from Halifax gets successfully past the submarines and the planes to Murmansk. There are one or two shore scenes, including a melodramatic one in a café inserted, presumably, so that we may have the customary shot of Mr. BOGART knocking someone cold, but mainly the camera travels over the ship, and over the sea, and into the attacking German submarines (rather too often). It is a good film, well done and exciting, a little too long.

The others this time are unseasonably many: not to mention the two of which I think least, they include *The Flemish Farm*, *Mr. Lucky*, *Dixie*, and *Coney Island*. The "worthiest" of these is no doubt *The Flemish Farm* (Director: JEFFREY DELL) which I regret to say bored me a good deal.



"... next you take two triangular bandages, fold them on the cross, hem the seams, allow enough material for a box pleat at the back, put in a couple of darts, press on the wrong side, and you have a marvellous blouse—and no coupons."

This British film has good intentions, and an idea based on fact (Belgian airman goes back to occupied Belgium to fetch the hidden flag of the Belgian Air Force), but in the end that boils down to another occupied-country man-hunt story, and we have seen too many of those far more powerfully done than this. The constant atmosphere of British good manners (or British good manners energetically pretending, for the occasion, to be bad) made the film both dull and irritating for me; but I should in honesty remind you that one critic has described it as "one of the best films of the war."

*Mr. Lucky* (Director: H. C. POTTER) is one of those odd mixtures of emotional melodrama and farce, in the wrong proportions. For my taste, it should have been nearly all farce. I was amused by CARY GRANT as a cheerfully unscrupulous gambler who learns to knit for a war relief organization; but then comes the heroine's gruff old grandfather in evening dress, and the heroine being gallant and gay, and the gambler reforming, and all that stuff. Not for me.

The others are coloured confectionery with entertaining moments. R. M.



"Anything for the pretty beige lace curtains and the spick-and-span brasswork?"

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Charlotte M. Yonge

THERE is not much material for a biography of Charlotte M. Yonge, but what there is has been used with great skill by Mrs. GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE to construct a picture of a life whose uneventfulness is not the least of its charms. In an epilogue to *Charlotte Mary Yonge* (CONSTABLE, 15/-), Mrs. BATTISCOMBE writes: "More and more people are finding relief from the strain of war in the long, ingenuous chronicles of this Victorian spinster. . . . Certainty is what the world is craving, and certainty is what Charlotte had in abundance." Born at Otterbourne in Hampshire, in 1823, Charlotte was the daughter of a retired army officer who had fought at Waterloo. She was strictly brought up. Breakfast and supper alike consisted of dry bread and milk, and her education, undertaken by her father, was severe and laborious. He was, she records in a charming autobiographical fragment, the "most exact of teachers, and required immense attention and accuracy." Charlotte, who loved her father, accepted this discipline without resentment. "Filial duty was for Charlotte the Moloch to which everything must be sacrificed," Mrs. BATTISCOMBE writes, and gives an extraordinary instance of Charlotte's respect for it. As a child she was forbidden by her mother to enter the cottages at Otterbourne, and she observed this prohibition until her death at seventy-seven, although it cut her off from her old pupils at Otterbourne School.

Nevertheless, the benefits of her upbringing far outweighed its demerits for someone of Charlotte's nature. She was very shy, her laugh, according to a boy cousin, was "a diabolical grimace," she took no interest in dress or dancing, and though she lived in the country she could neither ride nor drive a horse, and disliked gardening. That Charlotte's stories expressed her desire for companionship, fun and freedom, as Miss DELAFIELD says in her very interesting introduction, is certainly true. But if she had experienced these things in reality, she would have lost the peculiar charm to which Miss DELAFIELD refers in her description of a portrait of Charlotte at thirty-five—"It is a face of great nobility, candour and simplicity, and it wears still that air of mingled gravity and happy innocence that hardly ever outlasts childhood." The framework of duty and discipline within which she lived made her later work unduly didactic, but gave to her fresh early work the solidity which has preserved it for the refreshment of the present age.

H. K.

### Rocks Ahead

*Banquo*, before he was effectively disposed of by the power politics of his day, warned *Macbeth* that the ministers of evil start by telling their victims the truth and winning them with honest trifles. So universal is the response to such overtures that one wonders why Dr. ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRAFFORD views the urge for security that gave the Italians and Germans Mussolini and Hitler as something quite different from the urge for security that has given us the Beveridge Report. Taking our admirable reaction to Dunkirk as the spirit he can count on to work post-war compulsive planning, he has surely misread the English character. And his plea that compulsion is only the scaffolding of a brave new world sounds ominous enough to those of us who, "conditioned for controllability," are likely to roost for the rest of our days in the scaffolding. There are, however, many eloquent and sincerely felt passages in favour of personal freedom scattered about *The New Patriotism and the Old* (MACDONALD, 10/6), even if they belong rather to the old than to the new. H. P. E.

### "Ex Africa . . ."

CECIL BEATON'S photography, technically superb, succeeds always in making Nature imitate art. In his pictures of the Western Desert of Spring 1942 (*Near East*, BATSFORD, 12/6) he gives you surrealist perspectives, Picasso-like skeletons of burnt-out machinery, John Piper's ruinous buildings and hulks of aircraft which might have been painted by Paul Nash; an old Russian nun in a convent on the Mount of Olives seems to be posing for Rembrandt's "Portrait of his Mother." But besides this BEATON has made an unforgettable record of the strange, shifting, isolated life of the desert armies, lonely and yet intensely companionable, reduced to the barest essentials in the all-pervading, biscuit-coloured sand. You see lines of washing against a dazzling sky, letters from home, chalked inscriptions, the precious newspapers, the precious water, the pitiful wreckage after a battle. It is unfortunate that these photographs are so poorly arranged. This is obviously due to lack of space and might have been got over by cutting out, say, the account of Mr. BEATON's stay in Portugal, which is an anticlimax to the book. For the narrative is a record of his journey through North Africa, Persia, and Syria and home via Lisbon, undertaken for the Ministry of Information. It is written in the manner of *Cecil Beaton's New York*—that is to say as a decorator's (an exterior decorator's) notebook; intimately personal, concerned with the setting and occasional notes

on a character, but never with the actors—in this case, the battle itself. His eye for detail, for good stories, for atmosphere and above all for colour, whether he is in the Queen of Persia's garden or the operating room of a base hospital, is admirable. Tired with being put wise by omniscient American journalism, and overdosed with startling exposés of high strategy, the reader may well feel grateful for this chatty and vividly descriptive book.

P. M. F.

### Living Greece

In an age made safe for mediocrity it is useful to note that there is a natural *rapprochement* between rare intellects and mother-wit: between, for instance, Molière and his cook. The wise and the simple are happier together than either of them is with the mediocre; and that perhaps is why Humfry Payne, who fretted his heart out in Oxford as Assistant-Curator of Coins at the Ashmolean, found not only a career but a way of life on a remote promontory in Greece. Director at twenty-seven of the British School of Archaeology in Athens, he became celebrated a few years later for his excavation of the shrine of Hera at Perachora. But this impressive cache of pottery, bronzes, and ivories, "thick as stones," came to mean less to its discoverer than the friendship with peasants, shepherds and fishermen in which his great adventure involved him. Payne died of blood-poisoning in his early thirties; and his widow, DILYS POWELL, has written his life with a graceful, vivid, tender objectivity which becomes both her and her theme. Not for nothing did he and she drink Peirenean water cupped in an asphodel leaf. *The Traveller's Journey is Done* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 9/6) is alive with poetry.

H. P. E.

### Double Vision

Mr. CLAUDE HOUGHTON's latest tale has an idea—how half a dozen people are affected by reading an obscure novel. *Six Lives and a Book* (COLLINS, 8/6) owes more to Pirandello than the echoing title: it also owes the pleasant assumption that existence, or personality at any rate, is relative and that I am, after all, as you desire me. Mr. HOUGHTON makes only two mistakes in developing this. One is to quote from the inset story. This turns out to be one of those mystical modern German affairs, pregnant with a meaning that somehow resists the reader's efforts to bring it into the open. As interpreted, the lesson is this: people with eyes to see can plainly discern in every man, however much a failure, all his original promise (indeed there are moments when they literally see him double). This strikes the set at Marleham as revolutionary. Because of it they all—middle-aged disappointed woman, boy with ideals, kindly snob, racy sea-captain, sentimental aristocratic miss, and war-widower—they all have an experience. Its nature is not immediately apparent, but clearly the experience is tremendous. There are momentary hallucinations, the persons of the inset fictitious lodging-house appear—and seem not at all out of place—in Marleham, and everyone there is changed. The only other weakness has just been implied—there is hardly any difference between the personages in Marleham and those in the library book. Their emotions are violent but have little solid content, like washing billowing on the line. J. S.

### Felinophiles

There have not been many additions of late to the literature of cats; so felinophiles, as Mr. MICHAEL JOSEPH calls cat lovers, will no doubt be grateful for Miss ELEANOR FARJEON's *Golden Coney* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 5/-) and

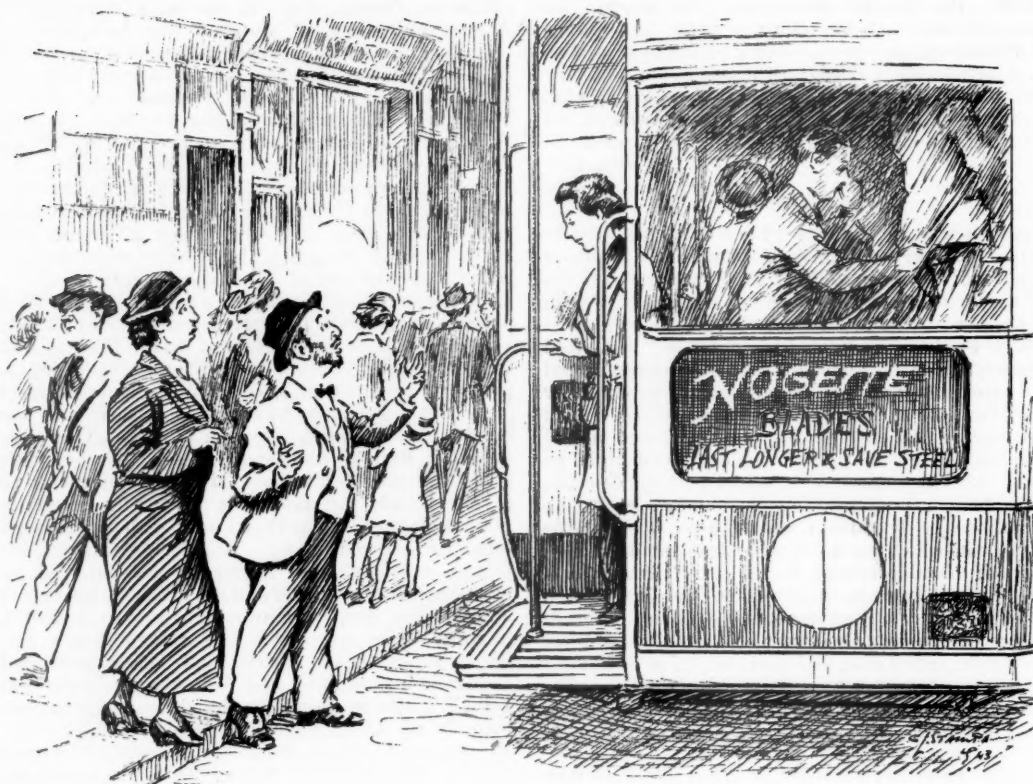
Mr. MICHAEL JOSEPH's *Charles: The Story of a Friendship* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 6/-). It was on a sunny afternoon in August 1930 that Mr. JOSEPH, who had for some time cherished an ambition to add a Siamese to his collection of cats, set out for Thames Ditton, where Charles, then a kitten some six weeks old, awaited him. An amusing experiment developed into the happiest of intimacies. "For me there will never be another cat like Charles. . . . He was a faithful and gentle cat. For kindness and respect he returned an abundant devotion." Ordinary roast meat meant little to Charles, but roast chicken or grilled sole pleased him well, and when roast pheasant, grouse or partridge was preparing he would emit ecstatic cries. Asparagus was one of his favourite dishes.

In *Golden Coney* the reader, thanks to Miss FARJEON's ardent imagination, is privileged to live through the emotional experiences of several cats. There is a battered tom, with bitten ears and bashed-in nose, whose innumerable progeny overrun Hampstead. When he opens his terrible jaws and yowls, "a hundred toms hear and cower; a hundred queens prick ears and crouch." One of his conquests is Bunny, who chants a song of praise when she gives birth to five kittens—"My feeble ones with powerful crying voices, my powerless ones with strong groping mouths, my weaklings that knead with vigorous paws my blissful exhausted flanks." Among these kittens is Golden Coney, a tabby who, happy in her enforced celibacy, gives the book a graceful note which it might otherwise lack. "She has," her owner writes to a friend, "the minutest *mew-mew-mew!* like a little bird's *peep-peep-peep!* which means Please! and Thank you! and Here-I-am! and Do-come! and I-do-like-you-really-and-truly-I-do!" There is also Pickle, handsome and charming, who loves Bunny but is rejected in favour of the battered tom. His wounded feelings are, however, assuaged by Coney, who believes him to be her father. *Golden Coney* is dedicated "to the sweet sweet memory of Minna-Minna-Mowbray," a cat which belonged to Mr. JOSEPH; and *Charles: The Story of a Friendship* is dedicated to "Eleanor Farjeon, who understands."

H. K.







"Plees—you haf rooms for two—yes?"

### What With All the Changes . . .

THE Mess is swaying quite noticeably now. Mr. Shaw must be getting pretty puzzled about it up in West Bromwich. Lieutenant Tinkle says that I would not know the Battalion now; there have been so many changes in Home Guard practice since I left. It seems that the Mess closes for drinking at ten sharp, and after that all drinks are served in another room, just like the Regular Army.

Major Crasher has just come in. Having heard that I was expected he has come down specially from the Airborne Home Guard Training School, of which he is Commandant, in case no one should have thought of offering me a drink. He says that his classes are getting highly efficient and can be dropped from great heights. The War Office are very pleased with them, and if they keep it up will probably let them try with parachutes next.

Captain Hackett says that as soon

as he heard that I was about he handed over the Weapon Training Class to Lieutenant Wiggle for the evening, so as not to miss me. He felt that it would be a shame if I were to go off without a drink after coming all this way. He says that I would not know the Battalion now; there are so many new weapons. The way he looks at it is that when we first started all the weapons the War Office had would work, but now they have all sorts of new ones coming through that are much more interesting than that and they pass them over to the Home Guard without a murmur. Even the Admiralty are helping. I should see the new torpedo-tubes. They are perfect in every way and have never even been fired, being a bit tight under the arms for the torpedoes, but this does not matter for Home Guard purposes, as they are not allowed torpedoes anyhow.

Everyone springs to attention as the

C.O. comes in. It looks very soldierly, though hard on those who are caught with a beer on the wing. In the very early days of the Mess, I remember, it used to be optional whether you did that or raised your hat. The C.O. says that he has a pile of work in the Orderly Room, but he felt that there should be someone to offer me hospitality and so has left Ethel to finish it off on the promise that she will not promote anyone without telling him. His idea is that I would not recognize the Battalion now, what with all the changes. He cannot say much now that I am no longer in the Battalion, but it is an open secret that the Home Guard has been allotted a new strategic rôle. If he mentions that "A" Company are now concentrating on tunnelling and Dutch I can probably put two and two together.

Lieutenant Wiggle says that as soon as he realized why Captain Hackett had handed over Weapon Training to

him he handed it over to Sergeant Philpot, so as to be sure that I was being reasonably entertained. It will be all right, however, as they are on the new rocket-gun, which is so simple that no one can go wrong with it. If it has a fault it is only that it falls a bit short on those occasions when the shell takes the gun with it, but then it is more frightening than ever for the enemy, so that it balances out.

The C.O. is very proud of the new Women's Section. He says they are a fine body of girls and itching to get at the enemy. They have refused to cook unless they can have Tommy-guns, and the sergeant-cook, who has always been nervous of firearms, is frightfully upset. Lieutenant Lovejoy was given charge of their general training at first, but the C.O. had to take him off as it was not clear who was training who in what. The girls are very sick about not having a uniform, but the Sector Commander has promised to try to get them warmer badges for the winter.

Lieutenant Tinkle says that the first camp of the year went off very well. They took over duty from a coastal defence unit for a few days, thus giving the regulars a well-earned opportunity to start square-pushing in the morning, instead of having to wait until after lunch as usual. Major Crasher had special leave from his school to take charge of Amphibious Training, to which he is inordinately addicted. He made everyone see how long they could hold their breath under water in full battle-order. Most of them had given up after a minute or two, but there were three who had been sticking it for thirty-six hours when they broke camp and by now had probably created a record.

Captain Whoopit, of the Alliance Knitting and Forwarding Company's Works Unit, has just come in. He has been putting some of the Women's Section through a course in the detection and clearance of mines and booby-traps, because they refused to do the switchboard work unless they could have some of the fun as well. He says that he will not have anything more to do with them as they have a silly sense of humour. It seems that he has lost one of his mines and they tell him that they have fixed it up somewhere on his works premises to see whether he will detect it or not.

Captain Hackett is getting sentimental about old times. He is talking about the time during the early days of the blitz, when we would have bagged the Messerschmitt that was dive-bombing us if it had not been "C" Company's night for the rifle.

Sergeant Philpot, as senior sergeant

present, has sent in a message inviting me into the Sergeants' Mess. He says that he has handed over Weapon Training to Corporal Twenlow specially in order to do this, because he feels that after all the stiffness and formality of the Officers' Mess I may like a quiet drink before I go.

Major Gollop has arrived. He says that I would never know the Battalion now. I ask quickly, Why, have there been any changes?

The Mess is certainly swaying more than it used to do. A. M. C.

## Winning the Peace.

THERE are still some people who regard planning as a waste of time. Have they forgotten the lessons of the period 1914-1918 and its dreadful aftermath? Have they forgotten the England to which our victorious heroes returned? It was an England scattered like chaff before the whirlwind deliveries of Gregory and Macdonald; an England wholly deceived by the subtleties of Warwick Armstrong. "A land fit for heroes to live in," was the promise: a land of rabbits and bowlers of "none for plenty" was their only heritage.

The other day I came across this alarming howler in a Yorkshire newspaper: "... and it was at this moment that he ordered the Eighth Army to hit Rommel for seven."\* I know: I know—you don't believe it. Well, perhaps it was a misprint. Or perhaps the writer's experience of cricket is limited to Lanes v. Yorks matches. But the printed stain remains and we are fools if we ignore its warning. Cricket is in mortal danger. In this crisis it is for each of us to act according to his conscience. The shades of William Caffyn, Julius Caesar, Fuller Pilch and Alfred Mynn are at my elbow as I write this

### GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

#### PART ONE—THE ART OF BATTING

(1) A wicket has fallen and it is your turn to bat. Walk very slowly to the wicket in order to accustom your eyes to the sunlight and/or protract your innings. Make a mental note of the route as you proceed so that your

return journey will be as free from embarrassment as possible.

(2) When you arrive at the wicket play for time in order to accustom your eyes to the sunlight, etc. Have the sight-screens moved, rebuckle your pads, wave to somebody in the crowd and slap the turf thoroughly all over with your bat.

(3) Next, take guard. To do this you hold the bat upright and look inquiringly at the umpire (the one at the bowler's end for preference). When he is quite satisfied with your general appearance deepen the communal block-hole with a few wristy strokes and move backwards a pace or two in the direction of square leg.

(4) You are now almost ready to receive the first ball. Familiarize yourself with the position of the fielders. First, check their number. Then, swinging the bat at arm's length, clear a space for yourself in the neighbourhood of the wicket. Look for and remember any gaps between the fielders through which you might run should you achieve a scoring stroke.

(5) Place the bat to earth and wait. If you hear a strange death-rattle behind you followed by a cry of "Oh, well bowled, sir!" you should follow the course set out in (1) above. If, however, you feel a slight jarring of the biceps and recognize a cry of "Run, you fool, run!" you will know that you have glanced the ball to fine leg or third man.

(6) We will suppose that you have survived the first ball. You are now supremely confident. You are anxious not only to make runs but to exhibit the strokes of the true cricketer. In order of importance these are the cover-drive, the hook, the late cut and the leg-glance. These strokes should be interspersed among repetitions of the scoring stroke. This takes the form of a sweep beginning at point and ending just short of the wicket-keeper. This is perhaps the most dangerous stroke (to wicket-keepers) in the batsman's repertory, but at times it is very effective.

(7) Remember that a good batsman does not allow his concentration to be destroyed by thoughts of suffering humanity.

(Coming Shortly: "TRUNDLING AS A FINE ART.")

"WOULD the Party seen removing Cardigan from Dyke Hall on Friday last return same immediately to save exposure."

Announcement in "The Forres News."

Whose?

\*I must apologize to Yorkshire. A reader in Sheffield reminds me that the figure 7 has a deep emblematic significance. It is supposed, in Yorkshire, to consist of 3 + 4 (three from a hit to deep square leg and four from an overthrow). The "overthrow" of Rommel is implicit.

## Letter from Cairo

From Lieut. Lionel Conkleshill to Mrs. Conkleshill

DEAR EDITH,—Simpson and I have at long last been granted a spot of leave, and we decided on Cairo. Simpson started his leave two days before I started mine, and was already pretty *au fait* with what may be called the hub of the glamorous Middle East by the time I arrived.

"Well, Simpson," I said as soon as I had unpacked and had a drink, "we've got a lot to see in seven days and we mustn't waste any time. There's the Pyramids, and Old Cairo, and the Citadel, and a dozen other places full of romance and exuding history at every pore. I suggest that we start off by lunching at a café where they sell real Egyptian food."

Simpson said that nobody was keener to see the real Egypt than he was himself, but unluckily he had happened to run into an old London friend named Jobson.

"I promised to lunch with him at Willie's Bar," he said, "and I hope you'll come along, because he wants to

meet you. He's read a lot of your stuff in various papers and he wouldn't believe it was really you out here as a mere lieutenant."

Naturally I went along. Willie's Bar is exactly like a bar at home in Fleet Street or the Strand in peacetime, and after a couple of beers apiece we sat down to tomato soup and a mixed grill, followed by fruit salad. Of course it turned out, as I had feared, that it was not my stuff Jobson had read. He was mixing me up with Alexander Conkleshill, the man who splits infinitives in all the best magazines in peacetime but is now, thanks to Providence, in the Tank Corps.

"I've got tickets for *Eight in a Bed*, the new film at the Royal," said Jobson, "and then I want you to come to tea with a friend of mine, Mrs. Tomlow-Snodghkins, whose husband is on the Staff."

Unfortunately Colonel Tomlow-Snodghkins was away in Jericho, with a mission getting data about the best way to destroy walls, so the extra crease Simpson and I put in our shorts K.D. was wasted, but we met a couple of very nice Queen Alexandra's nurses and fixed up tennis at Heliopolis for the next day, and it seemed only

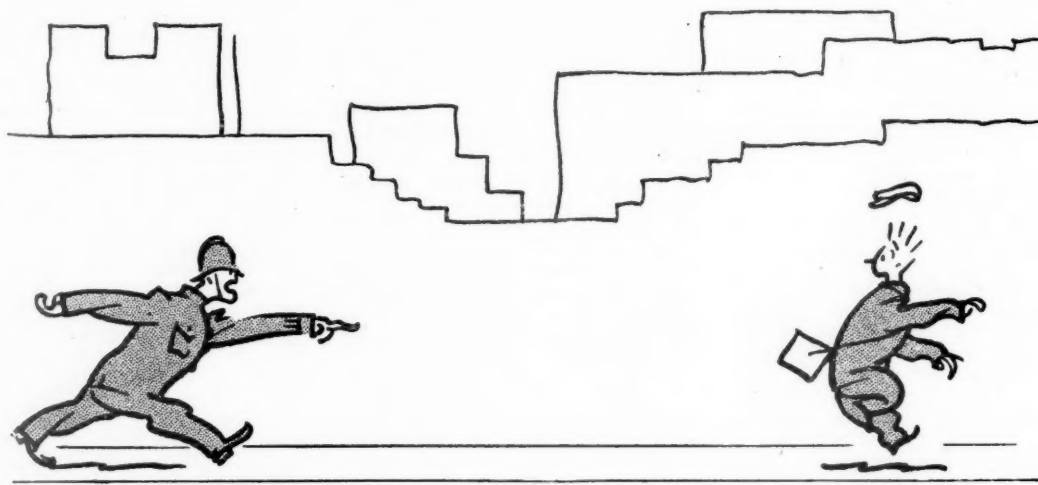
fair to take them to see *Devils on Broadway* at the Cinema de Metro in the evening, where we ran into a Toc H padre who suggested a spot of golf for the following day and promised to lend us some clubs. Luckily we were back in time to go to see R. C. Sherriff's *Badger's Green* which the Cairo Amateur Dramatic Society were playing at the Ezhekhiah Theatre.

You must not think, however, that we have all our meals at Willie's Bar. The Toc H padre took us to a place where you can get the most marvellous scrambled eggs, and we generally lunch there and have dinner at Robinson's Hotel.

Things are pretty expensive, of course, but I tell Simpson that it is worth it. In years to come when we are back in humdrum old England it will be grand to remember our colourful holiday in this wonderful old city, so different from anything we have at home.

Simpson has bought a big book about the Ancient Monuments of Egypt which he is posting home. He says when we read it in forty years' time it will be nice to think what a lot of things we could have seen if we had only had time.

Your loving husband, LIONEL.



Fongasse

"Here, you—what's that you've got in that box?!!!"

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she is very  
Silent about her

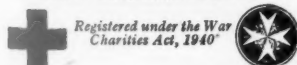
work she is not silent  
when Mum says have  
some OXO dear she  
says that's the stuff  
to give the troops Mum. Sam



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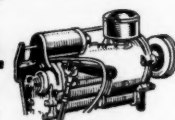
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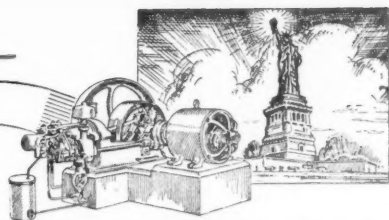
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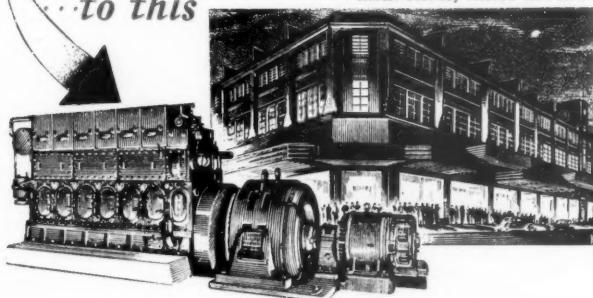
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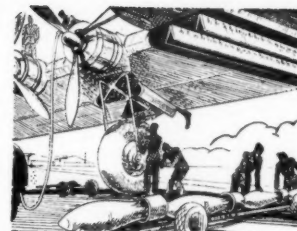
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*In each case the tobacco was in first rate condition and has provided me with many good pipes—a much needed solace under active service conditions."*

[The original letter can be inspected.]

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